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The Influence of Goethe
Upon Margaret Fuller

German

Ph. D.

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THE INFLUENCE OF GOETHE UPON
MARGARET FULLER

BY

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS BRAUN

A B. University of Missouri, 1902; A. M. Harvard, 1907

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of

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IN

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June 1st 1909

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Frederick Augustus Braun

ENTITLED

*The influence of Goethe upon
Margaret Fuller*

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF

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In Charge of Major Work

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Committee
on
Final Examination

THE INFLUENCE OF GOETHE

UPON

MARGARET FULLER

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Preface.

The purpose of this treatise and a sufficient outline of the same are given at the end of the introduction. Since Margaret Fuller is not as generally known, as might be wished, and as without doubt she deserves to be, and little is known of the powerful influence she exerted upon our greatest American thinkers and most important literary men, it was thought advisable by way of introduction to give some indication, by no means exhaustive, of her true relations to them and their development. This will sufficiently account for the seeming digressions in the introductory chapter of this work.

The author wishes to express first of all his deep gratitude and indebtedness to Professor Julius Goebel, the head of the Department of German in the University of Illinois. It was upon his recommendation that this work was undertaken and under his directions that it was written. The writer also desires to thank Professor John A. Walz, Chairman of the Department of Germanic Language and Literature at Harvard University, for his suggestions and kindly interest in the writer and the prosecution of this work; and Dr. Frederick W. C. Lieder, for his friendly assistance in securing some of the books necessary for this study. Gratitude is also expressed for the assistance given the writer by Miss Edith D. Fuller, the neice of Margaret Fuller; and also for the courtesies of the authorities of the Boston Public Library, Messrs. Whitney and Wheeler, especially.

F. A. B.

University of Illinois
June, 1909.

N O T E

The titles of the following works referred to in the footnotes are abbreviated thus:

Memoirs, or Mem. = Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Henry Channing and James Freeman Clarke.

Higginson = Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Margaret Fuller Ossoli.

Howe = Julia Ward Howe, Margaret Fuller.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

One of the most interesting and influential literary characters in the history of American literature is Margaret Fuller. She has claim to greatness for several reasons.

First: She was a leader in the great movement during the fourth and fifth decades of the last century which freed American literature from a mere slavish imitation of European, - chiefly English, - models, and established it on a firm basis in our own country. This, the enthusiastic young thinkers at the head of the movement, and among them Margaret Fuller, accomplished by directing our poets and writers to take for their themes American subjects, to give these an American setting and local coloring, and to execute them in an original manner.

Secondly, and probably more important, Margaret Fuller, as leader of this same group of thinkers, and in conjunction with them, insisted, after the pattern of Goethe and Schiller, that poetry should have its fountains deep in personal human experience, in life itself, and should flow from the human heart, and not be, as she said, "the paltriest offspring of the human brain".¹

Thirdly; She did, in all probability, more than any other writer or critic to bring the Americans to a just appreciation, and fair estimation of the rich literature of Germany, especially of Goethe. It was Madame de Stael and Thomas Carlyle

¹Art., Literature, and the Drama, p. 306.

who introduced us into these rich literary fields. But it was Margaret Fuller more than anybody else, who interpreted for us, and taught us how to enjoy and appreciate the splendid productions of these great German poets and thinkers, especially Goethe, who, as Emerson well said, is "the pivotal mind in modern literature, - for all before him are ancients, and all who have read him are moderns".¹

Margaret Fuller's Place in American Literature.

Margaret Fuller is probably felt as a force in American literature for the first time in connection with the literary club which was the source of the great movement for the liberation and deepening of American literature. This club, of which she was a member, had its beginning probably as early as 1833, and comprised finally in its membership the entire knot of bright young thinkers then in New England. It contained in its list such names as Emerson, F. H. Hedge, George Ripley, Alcott, Theodore Parker, W. H. Channing, J. F. Clarke, Elizabeth P. Peabody, and later Thoreau, besides many others which are famous. The club was called by various names, none of which, on account of the diversity of the views of its members seem exactly to fit. It was called "The Transcendental Club", "The Symposium Club", and occasionally "The Hedge Club", because the dates of its meetings, once a month, were set to suit *Mr.* Hedge's visits to

¹Memoirs I, p. 242.

Boston from his home in Bangor, Maine.

That Margaret Fuller was an active member of the club from the very beginning, and the recognized leader and guiding spirit, is testified to not only by all her biographers, but also by the fact that later she became editor of the "Dial", the organ and mouthpiece of the whole movement, as also the leader in the famous Boston "Conversations". Mr. Higginson says in his biography of her:

"Apart from every word she ever wrote, Margaret Fuller will always be an important figure in American history, for this plain reason: that she was the organizer and executive force of the first thoroughly American literary enterprise".¹

Of the importance of the magazine of which she was the editor, the same writer says: "To determine its [the literary and philosophical movements] real worth and weight . . . we must go to the "Dial". That is its only authentic record. To know what Emerson individually was, we can go to his books; it is the same with Parker, Thoreau, Alcott. But what it was that united these diverse elements, what was their central spirit, what their collective strength, or weakness, their maximum and minimum, their high and low water mark, this must be sought in the "Dial". That was the alembic within which they were all distilled, and the priestess who superintended this intellectual chemic process . . . Margaret Fuller".²

¹T. W. Higginson Margaret Fuller Ossoli, p. 130.

²Higginson, p. 130.

Trent in his "American Literature" says of the "Dial".

"Most important of all it (the "Dial") gave a new impetus and in some ways a new direction to literary energy, especially in New England".¹

Concerning the quality of Margaret Fuller's writing and her power as a critic, Mr. Higginson says: "First she excelled in 'lyric glimpses', or the power of putting a high thought into a sentence. . . . She seems to me to have been in the second place, the best literary critic whom America has yet seen".²

In what a noble and true spirit of patriotism she accomplished this great service for the literature of our country, and with what a sacrifice to herself, may be seen when we consider that she was promised for editing the "Dial", only two hundred dollars a year, which were probably never paid her, since the other expenses of the magazine were about equal to the income from subscriptions. Still she writes in a letter: "It is for dear New England that I want this review".³

Horace Greeley's estimation of Margaret Fuller was that she was "one whom impartial judgment must pronounce the most capable and noteworthy American woman the world has yet known"; and of her works: "I believe the writings of no other woman were ever so uniformly worthy of study".⁴

¹Trent "American Literature", p. 318.

²Higginson, 288.

³Mem. II, 26.

⁴Intr. to Papers on Literature and Art, p. 1.

If Margaret Fuller were considered only from the standpoint of the great influence she exercised upon the development and lives of our greatest American authors and thinkers, that alone ought to insure her a high place in the history of American thought and letters.

James Freeman Clarke, one of her biographers, and a great preacher and writer, says of her: "The difficulty which we all feel in describing our past intercourse and friendship with Margaret Fuller, is that the intercourse was so intimate, and the friendship so personal, that it is like making a confession to the public of our most interior selves. For this noble person by her keen insight and her generous interest, entered into the depth of every soul with which she stood in any real relation. To print one of her letters is like giving an extract from our own private journal".¹

Again the same author writes of her concerning the great power that she possessed in bringing out that which was best and highest in every person with whom she came into close relation.

"I am disposed to think, much as she excelled in general conversation, that her greatest mental efforts were made in intercourse with individuals. All her friends will unite in the testimony, that whatever they may have known of wit and eloquence in others, they have never seen one who, like her, by the conversation of an hour or two, could not merely entertain and inform, but make an epoch in one's life. We all dated back

¹ Mem. I, 61.

to this or that conversation with Margaret, in which we took a complete survey of great subjects, came to some clear view of a difficult question, saw our way open before us to a higher plane of life, and were led to some definite resolution or purpose which has had a bearing on all our subsequent career."¹

In a letter to T. W. Higginson thirty years later, Mr. Clarke again writes (May 15, 1883) "Margaret Fuller had so many aspects to her soul that she might furnish material for a hundred biographers and all could not be said even then".²

W. H. Channing, another one of her biographers, and well known, bears witness to the same power of Margaret Fuller to enter into the most intimate relation with the intellectual and spiritual lives of those with whom she was associated.

"I have no hope," says the writer, "of conveying to readers my sense of the beauty of our relation, as it lies in the past with brightness falling on it from Margaret's risen spirit. It would be like printing a chapter of autobiography, to describe what is so grateful in memory, its influence upon one's self".³

The fact that a man like Emerson became one of her biographers is, in itself an unassailable proof of her high position and importance, when we consider with what enthusiasm he

¹Mem. I, 107

²Margaret Fuller MSS. Boston Public Library.

³Mem. II, 9.

writes of her and her relations to him, and the place he assigns her. Few persons in America, or elsewhere, have been honored by such a distinction.

In this masterly analysis of her mind and character, which Horace Greeley said, was "entitled to the praise of being the fairest, frankest, and most effective biography of our day".¹ Emerson sounds the deepest recesses of the heart of this notable woman to discover the sources of the influence she wielded and the power that flowed from her soul.*

Of her personal influence on the minds of the great men about her, Emerson says: "She wore this circle of friends, when I first knew her, as a necklace of diamonds about her neck. They were so much to each other that Margaret seemed to represent them all, and, to know her was to acquire a place with them. The confidences given her were their best, and she held them to them. She was an active, inspiring companion and correspondent,

* It is rather strange that this biography, so much praised by Greeley and other noted writers, and as it seems to me, one of the best products of Emerson's mind in his great power of analysis of human character, has to my knowledge, never been republished among his collected works.

¹ Introduction to "Papers on Literature and Art",
page 1.

and in all, the art, the thought, and the nobleness in New England, seemed at that moment, related to her, and she to it".¹

Concerning the many conversations that Margaret Fuller held with Emerson, as after dinner they read, or walked, or rode, during the weeks she spent every year at Emerson's home, he writes: "They interested me in every manner; - talent, memory, wit, stern introspection, poetic play, religion, the finest personal feeling, the aspects of the future, each followed each in full activity, and left me, I remember, enriched and sometimes astonished by the gifts of my guest. Her topics were numerous, but the cardinal points of poetry, love, and religion were never far off. . . . She was familiar with all the field of elegant criticism in literature".²

"The day was never long enough", Emerson writes again, "to exhaust her opulent memory; and I, who knew her intimately for ten years, - from July, 1836, to August, 1846, when she sailed for Europe, - never saw her without surprise at her new powers".³

Thomas Carlyle writes of her to Emerson upon the occasion of her visit to England when she spent some hours with him. "Something greatly superior to all I knew before, in fact the undeniable utterances (now first undeniable to me) of a true heroic mind. . . . She is truly high. Honour to Margaret, and more speed to her!"⁴

¹Mem. I, 213.

²Ibid. 217f.

³Ibid. 214f.

⁴Emerson-Carlyle correspondence, p.

And last of all, a passage from Emerson's journal shows the mighty influence she exercised upon this our greatest American thinker and philosopher. "I have no friend", says he, "whom I more wish to be immortal than she. An influence I cannot spare, but would always have at hand for recourse".¹

The statements just quoted from these famous men establish, once for all, Margaret Fuller's powerful influence upon our greatest thinkers and some of our most famous literary men, and the high position she held in this, the most important movement, the creative period in American literature.

It may now properly be asked, in what condition did Margaret Fuller and those associated with her in this reform find American literature and what did they do to elevate it, and how did they go about it?

In what state American literature was at the beginning of this movement is well described by T. W. Higginson.

"Margaret Fuller grew up at a time when our literature was still essentially colonial; not for want of material, but for want of self-confidence. As Theodore Parker said in his vigorous vernacular, somewhat later, the cultivated American literature was exotic; and the native literature 'rowdy', consisting mainly of campaign squibs, coarse satire, and frontier jokes".²

Margaret Fuller, herself, in writing on American literature in the "Dial", says; "Some thinkers may object to this essay,

¹Margaret Fuller MSS. in Boston Public Library.

²Higginson, 132. Quoted from Mass. Quarterly Review III, 206.

that we are about to write of that which has, as yet, no existence. For it does not follow because many books are written by persons born in America, that there exists an American Literature. . . Books which imitate or represent the thoughts and life of Europe do not constitute an American literature."¹

Imitation then, and a "half boastful, half timid, boyish crudity"², as she says elsewhere, were among the chief faults of our literature at that period. The literature most imitated was the English. Of the injurious effect of this imitation Margaret Fuller says; "We use her (England's) language, and receive in torrents the influence of her thought, yet it is, in many respects, uncongenial and injurious to our constitution. What suits Great Britain with her insular position and consequent need to concentrate and intensify her life, her limited monarchy and spirit of trade, does not suit us."³

Even Longfellow was among those who were of the candid opinion that our literature was to be of a kind of conglomerate or composite nature, uniting within itself merely all the foreign elements represented here; nothing more. In a letter dated July 1844, he writes:

"As our character and modes of thought do not differ essentially from those of England, our literature cannot. Vast

¹Art, Lit., and the Drama, 298.

²Mem. II, 7.

³Art, Lit., and the Drama, 299.

forests, lakes, and prairies cannot make great poets."¹

Even as late as Jan., 1847, he writes in his journal; "Much is said now-a-days of a national literature. Does it mean anything? **Such** a literature is the expression of national character. We have, or shall have, a composite one, embracing French, Spanish, Irish, English, Scotch, and German peculiarities. Whoever has within himself most of these is our truly national writer."

It did not occur to Longfellow until much later, that with new native impulses, a new national feeling, greater personal freedom, and broader and more liberal political views, we could develop something original, a new type of character, - as we have done, - and a literature distinctively characteristic of our country, differing in some ways from any and all other literatures, and corresponding to the American type of character. It is of Longfellow, as he was at this period, and the poets who believed as he did, and wrote accordingly, "Colonists", as Margaret Fuller calls them, that she writes:-

"What shall we say of the poets? The list is scanty; amazingly so, for there is nothing in the courses that could affect lyrical and narrative poetry. . . . Of the myriad leaves garnished with smooth stereotyped rhymes that issue yearly from our press, you will not find one time in a million a little piece written from any such impulse (of the heart) or with the least

¹Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Boston and New York, 1893, Vol. II, 19f.

²Ibid. II, 73.

sincerity or sweetness of tone. They are written for the press, in the spirit of imitation or vanity, the paltriest offspring of the human brain, for the heart disclaims, as the ear is shut against them".¹

Margaret Fuller here puts her finger upon the two cardinal faults of our literature, and especially poetry, at the time, the seat of the disease that kept it from growing and flowering. It lacked, first of all, originality, and secondly, depth. The poetry was merely a product of the intellect, and not, as it should be, an expression of the innermost feelings of the heart, feelings that arise out of personal experiences in life.

A distinctive and most creditable feature of the criticism of these reformers is its positive and constructive character. While they could not, and would not, bear anything pedantic, and attacked with all their might what they thought shallow, narrow, or false in life and literature, they enthusiastically offered in its stead something better and more substantial.

With what enthusiasm and high hope they carried on this reform may be seen from the following passages.

"He who doubts", says Emerson in the 'Dial', "whether this age or this country can yield any contribution to the literature of the world only betrays his own blindness to the necessity

¹Article on American Literature in the Dial. Literature and Art, Part II, 130. Art, Literature and the Drama, 306.

of the human soul."¹

To enable an American literature to grow up in our country, Margaret Fuller writes; "an original idea must animate this nation and fresh currents of life must call into life fresh thoughts along its shores."² Imitation will not suffice. We are ourselves able to develop a glorious literature of our own, we "a mixed race . . . with ample field and verge enough to range in and leave every impulse free, and abundant opportunity to develop a genius, wide and full as our rivers, flowery, luxuriant, and impassioned as our vast prairies."³ And of our poetry she says: "Men's hearts beat, hope, and suffer always, and they must crave such means [as poetry] to vent them".⁴

Such were the thoughts and literary ideals of this new movement in which Margaret Fuller played such an important part, ideals grand as those which Goethe and his associates set up for German literature during the "Storm and Stress" period in Germany. Such a literature inspired by our own native impulse and environments and grown upon our own American soil, but expressing feelings that flow from the heart, from personal experience in life, is not only national, but universal.

¹Higginson, 137.

²Article on Amer. Literature in the "Dial". Art, Lit., and the Drama, 298.

³Ibid. 299.

⁴Ibid. 306.

"These words", says Mr. Higginson, writing of an expression exactly similar to those just quoted, "were like a trumpet call. . . . They make it very clear . . . that the intellectual excitement of the day, whatever may be thought of it as philosophy, produced in literature the effect of emancipation. The 'Dial' was the embodiment of this movement; and without Margaret Fuller it is doubtful whether the 'Dial' would ever have been born."¹

What the effect of these new doctrines was, and how well the originators carried out their high ideals, and in turn handed them down to their literary successors is well known.

"After fifty years of national life", says Mr. Higginson, "the skylark and nightingale were at last dethroned from our literature and in the first volume of the "Dial" the blue-bird and the wood-thrush took their place. Since then they have held their own; . . . Americans still go to England to hear the skylark, but Englishmen also come to America to hear the bobolink".²

It is said Margaret Fuller failed to do justice to Longfellow and James Russell Lowell. It is true she was wrong in her prophecies regarding these two then young American poets. But when we consider that neither of these writers had written at that time the works upon which their fame now rests, those truly American in character and tone, and now unpromising and

¹Higginson, 140.

²Ibid. 137.

full of faults some of their earlier works were, we can better understand how such criticism, honestly and conscientiously given, could issue from her pen. In fact it was well for both Longfellow and Lowell that they so early came to a knowledge of their mistakes and failings. Both poets were wise enough to profit by these criticisms, and it was precisely by following out the ideals and suggestions which Margaret Fuller set before them, and avoiding, to a very marked degree, the faults pointed out by her that they became the illustrious poets they did.

It remains to say a few words concerning the writers who criticised Margaret Fuller unjustly. Some of these criticisms are due to a misunderstanding of her true nature, and the purpose she had in view, and are honest. This misunderstanding was partly because of her plain-spoken, straight-forward, and somewhat blunt manner of address, and the unfavorable impression she so often made in public upon strangers and those not very well acquainted with her. There are, however, several criticisms of her written out of malice and spite, assailing her at every point, not sparing even her character. Editors and authors then often sought to revenge themselves, by personal abuse, for some literary slight, or perhaps, an unfavorable criticism of some of their works. The tomahawk theory was still in practice and men did not hesitate to "get even". This probably accounts for Edgar Allen Poe's scathing, unjust remarks concerning her, and his only too frequently dishonest criticism concerning others who happened to provoke his ire. Lowell is guilty of the same

thing, though mildly so, in his "Fable for Critics", in which he satirizes Margaret Fuller's individual characteristics in "Miranda". Probably Hawthorne, too, bore her some grudge, or he could hardly have written of her what he did. For us it is enough to judge her by what she wrote and did, and by the verdict passed upon her by such men as Emerson, Greeley, J. F. Clarke, W. H. Channing and others, who knew her best, and who, we know, gave their honest, candid opinion of her.

A great deal has been said in this, the introductory chapter of the present treatise, that may perhaps not seem to have much direct bearing on the subject treated. But since Margaret Fuller seems to be so little known, and yet a person of so much influence in the most important epoch, the creative period of our literature and philosophy, it was thought best to introduce her in this way. It is also of great importance to know just what Margaret Fuller did, and what her relation to the other members of the noted literary circle, of which she was the head, was. It is necessary to know this in estimating what portion of the great ideas that animated the soul of this talented and truly wonderful woman, ideas prophetic and far in advance of the age, and by virtue of which she developed her powerful personality, were due to her study of Goethe, or inspired by him. And lastly, these same facts are important in arriving at some idea as to how much influence she exerted by virtue of her strong personality, and her position as editor, author, and

critic in gaining an appreciation for Goethe among the cultured classes in New England, and through them generally among the well educated all over the country.

It will be the purpose of the following chapters to trace ~~the development of~~ Margaret Fuller through her various stages of development. First to be considered is her early Puritan education, with its one sidedness, and its moral and religious rigorism, developing the intellect alone, and neglecting altogether the education of the heart, the truly human side of character. It will be shown how she rebelled against the Puritan church dogma, which seemed to have nothing in common with her inner life, and how she longed for a full and harmonious development of her whole being, intellectual and emotional, in short her whole nature, through a full experience in life. Then how she found in Goethe, "the great apostle of individual culture",¹ as she calls him, the means for such a development as she wished, how her nature and individuality expanded "as the apple blossom at the end of a warm week in May",² as Mr. Clarke writes, and she grew to be the strong personality she was. It will be shown how she accepted and lived out to a very large extent Goethe's religious and philosophical doctrines of life, how she interpreted Goethe and his works and defended him against the severe criti-

¹Woman in the Nineteenth Century, 124.

²Mem. I, 114.

cism, narrow views, and prejudice of many of her countrymen, and finally, how she wielded a powerful influence in favor of a general study of German and a dissemination of German, and especially Goethean thought among the cultured of New England and through them among the educated over the whole country generally.

CHAPTER I.

EDUCATION.

"What I mean by the muse is that unimpeded clearness of the intuitive powers, which a perfectly truthful adherence to every admonition of the higher instincts would bring to a finely organized human being. . . . Should these faculties have free play, I believe they will open new, deeper and purer sources of joyous inspiration than have yet refreshed the earth. Let us be wise and not impede the soul".¹

A natural development of the highest intuitive powers of the soul, by means of a full experience of life, this was Margaret Fuller's broad doctrine of education;² yet she, herself, never had the advantage of such a bringing up.

Margaret Fuller* received her early education in her home. Her father, a lawyer and politician, "a man of business even in literature",³ as she characterizes him in a sketch of her youth in an autobiographical romance, was her teacher. He was of Puritan stock, doubtless conscientious and well-meaning in

*Sarah Margaret Fuller, the eldest child of Timothy Fuller was born at Cambridgeport, Massachusetts, May 23, 1810. Her girlhood days she spent in and about Cambridge, except two years during which she attended the

¹Woman in the Nineteenth Century, 116f.

²See Mem. I, 132f.

³Ibid. I, 14.

his way, a man of vigor and well-informed, since he graduated with honors from Harvard University. But he was also a man of undue self-assertion, often very impractical, and in some respects narrow.

"He was a character, in its social aspect, of quite the common sort"¹, said his daughter. His great aim of existence was to be an honored citizen and to have a home on earth, "to work for distinction in the community, and for the means of supporting a family".²

girls' school of the Misses Prescott at Groton, Massachusetts. At Cambridge and Boston she met and made friends with many noted men and women who remained her enthusiastic admirers through life. In 1833 the Fuller family removed to Groton. Here besides her studies Miss Fuller had many family cares and household duties to look after. Her father dying in 1835, increased these burdens until her health became seriously impaired. She had to give up her long cherished hope of going abroad, to help support and care for the family and contribute towards educating her brothers and sisters. During 1836-37 she taught in A. Bronson Alcott's school in Boston, and 1837-38 in the Green Street School at Providence, Rhode Island. In 1839 the Fuller family moved to Jamaica Plain, where they resided during the next three years. After that they returned to Cambridge and remained there until the home was broken up

¹ - ²Mem. I, 12.

Margaret Fuller's description of her mother, also of Puritan stock, is, that she was "one of those fair and flowerlike natures, which sometimes spring up even beside the most dusty highways of life, - a creature not to be shaped into a merely useful instrument, but bound by one law with the blue sky, the dew, and the frolic birds. Of all persons whom I have known, she had in her most of the angelic, - of that spontaneous love for every living thing, for man, and beast, and tree, which restores the golden age".¹ Mr. Fuller's love for her, says Margaret, "was

in 1844. Margaret Fuller published in 1839 a translation of Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe, which was followed in 1842 by a translation of Letters of Gunderode and Bettine von Arnim. During the summer of 1843 Miss Fuller took a trip on and in the vicinity of the Great Lakes. Summer on the Lakes, published during the same year, is an account of her experiences and impressions on this trip. Woman in the Nineteenth Century came out in 1844, and Papers on Literature and Art, a collection of her magazine and newspaper articles previously published, in 1846. In 1852 her collected works, edited by her brother, appeared, in which the volume At Home and Abroad and much besides which had never before appeared including a poetic translation of Goethe's Tasso, was published. Later, 1895, and 1903, two additional works, Margaret and her Friends, a synopsis of ten "Conversations" held in Boston, 1839-40, and the Love

¹ Mem. I, 12f.

the green spot on which he stood apart from the common-places of a mere bread-winning, bread-bestowing existence".¹ "She was 'timidly friendly'", says Mr. Higginson, and "must have been one of the sweetest and self-effacing wives ever ruled by a strong-willed spouse".²

Letters of Margaret Fuller appeared. Her most important work, however, was as editor of the Dial, 1840-42, and as literary and art critic for the New York Tribune, 1844-46. In 1846 she sailed for Europe and after spending some time on a visit in England and France, where she made the acquaintance of some of the most noted literary men and women then living, she took up her residence in Italy. There she met and married, in 1847, the Marquis Giovanni Angelo Ossoli, a friend of Mazzini. She became much interested in the Italian Revolution of 1848-49, and was present with her husband in Rome during the seige. While her husband fought on the walls she took charge of one of the hospitals for the wounded within the city. She also wrote during these years the History of the Italian Revolution. On May 17, 1850, the Ossolis sailed on the merchant vessel, Elizabeth, for America, but the vessel was wrecked July 19 off Fire Island, and Margaret, her husband, and child all perished.

¹Mem. I, 12.

²Higginson, 17f.

Margaret inherited characteristics from both her parents. Her lofty idealism, her love of the true and beautiful in character, as in nature, - the tendency toward these, she inherited from her mother. Her accurate habits of mind, her great intellectuality and strong personality, but also, to a large extent, her impracticality, her lack of social tact, and a certain abruptness of manner, which so often repelled those not well acquainted with her and caused them to heap much unjust criticism upon her, but which really hid a kind and noble heart, - all these traits she inherited from her father.

Unfortunately in some respects for Margaret, her father took her entire bringing up and education into his own hands, and from early childhood brought her up in the straight-jacket Puritan manner. Education, as he understood the term, meant merely a development of the mental faculties, "an intellectual forcing process", says Mr. Higginson. This system was the one generally adopted and practiced at the time throughout New England and in most parts of the civilized world. It was thus that Margaret's bodily health, and those greater qualities of heart and

The manuscripts of her last work, that on Italy, as probably also the notes she had taken on the Life of Goethe were lost in the wreck.

character with which nature had so richly endowed her from the maternal side, were neglected, or left to develop themselves best they could, during these early years. It was this side of her nature that continually rebelled and cried out against the one-sided, mere intellectual education, the development of the mind, to the neglect of the heart and body as well.

Margaret began the study of Latin at six years of age. Though her father thought to do well by her, and took great pleasure in instructing his oldest child himself, she says; "He was a severe teacher, both from habits of mind and his ambition for me. . . . He had no belief in minds that listen, wait, and receive. He had no conception of the subtle and indirect motions of imagination and feeling."¹ "His influence on me was great", she continues, "and opposed to the natural unfolding of my character".² She had to "put on the fetters", she said, with the result that "my true life . . . was secluded and veiled over by a thick curtain of available intellect".³ *

*Arthur B. Fuller, the brother of Margaret, wrote that their father's sternness and exacting manner, as she has described it, and his overlooking to a certain extent the physical health of his daughter by tasking to the utmost her extraordinary powers, leaves a wrong impression of his

¹ Mem. I, 15f.

² Ibid. 17f.

³ Ibid. 18.

The child had given to her "tasks as many and various as the hours would allow".¹ Since her father did not return from his office until the day was over, she had to recite to him in the evening. She was thus frequently kept up very late, because they were often interrupted. Her mind and her feelings were "kept on the stretch" late into the night, when she, or any child of her years, should have been in bed asleep and at rest for several hours.

"The consequence", says Margaret Fuller, "was a premature development of the brain, that made me a 'youthful prodigy' by day, and by night a victim of spectral illusions, nightmare, and somnambulism, which at the time prevented the harmonious development of my bodily powers and checked my growth, while, later, they induced continual headache, weakness and nervous affections of all kinds. As these again reacted on the brain, giving undue force to every thought and every feeling, there was finally produced a state of being both too active and too intense, which wasted my constitution."²

real nature. It was, he says, through error and his great zeal for his daughter and not through lack of love or kindness that he caused her to suffer.

Preface to *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli*, Boston, 1874,
p. 4f.

¹ Mem. I, 16.

² Ibid. 15.

"Poor child!" she writes years afterwards, "Far remote in time, in thought, from that period, I look back on these glooms and terrors, wherein I was enveloped, and perceive that I had no natural childhood".¹

In 1844, in referring to ~~the~~ improved methods in education, physical, as also mental and spiritual, she writes in her diary, "If we had only been as well brought up in these respects! It was not mother's fault that she was ignorant of every physical law, young, untaught country girl as she was; but I can't help mourning sometimes that my bodily health should have been so destroyed by the ignorance of both my parents".²

It was with her books at this period that Margaret Fuller passed her days, especially Latin works, of which she must have read a great many. Besides Latin, she mentions in these early years, English grammar and Greek. The latter, however, she did not learn as thoroughly as Latin, "only enough to feel that the sounds told the same story as the mythology",³ which charmed her very much.

"Within the house", she continues, "everything was socially utilitarian; my books told of a proud world".⁴ One joy which she found, however, was the little garden near the house, of which she cannot say too much, and where she came into heart to heart touch with nature at first hand. She speaks, too, of

¹ Mem. I, 16.

² Diary, 1844, quoted by Higginson, 22.

³ Mem. I, 22.

⁴ Ibid. 23.

the pleasure she took in viewing the sunset. Of friends, she speaks with rapture of her attachment for a cultured young English lady, who was paying a visit to America, and seemed to Margaret to have exactly that developed within her after which Margaret then unconsciously sought, namely, her inner life and soul. Outside of these two pleasures, which are suited rather to the temperament of an older person than to that of a child, her childhood seems to have been particularly barren of the many little friendships with others of her own age, and the various pleasures and pastimes in which children usually take so much delight. Writing of this period later, she says: "The common prose world (was) so present to me".¹

It was this living merely in books and phrases that made her admire so much those Greeks and Romans of whom she studied. "I lived in those Greek forms the true faith of a refined and intense childhood. So great was the force of reality with which these forms impressed me, that I prayed earnestly for a sign. . . . But no sign was given, and I was left a waif stranded upon the shores of modern life".²

Her feeling for the Romans was nothing short of ecstasy. They appeared to her to live real, positive lives, they possessed personality, were real men of flesh and blood; natural, vigorous, practical men of deeds. They had at least one side of their character developed that had been neglected in her education, and feeling this want in herself, made her admire them and long

¹ Mem. I, 18.

² Ibid. 23.

for the qualities which distinguished them.

"I thought with rapture", she writes, "of the all accomplished man, him of many talents, wide resources, clear sight and omnipotent will. A Caesar seemed great enough".¹ "Horace was a great deal to me then, and is so still. He is a natural man of the world; he is what he ought to be".² "It never shocks us", she continues, "that the Roman is self-conscious. One wants no universal truths from him, no philosophy, but only his life, his Roman life felt in every pulse, realized in every gesture."³

It was not long, however, until these characters seemed insufficient to her. As soon as she learned to know from Shakespeare, Moliere, and Cervantes characters that were better rounded out she felt that too much emphasis was laid on the external side of these characters, especially the Roman, and not enough on the internal. "I did not then know", she says, "that such men impoverish the treasury to build the palace".⁴

When Margaret was thirteen years old she was already so mature in mind and appearances that she associated with and sought her companions among girls much older than herself, but without

¹ Mem. I, 22.

² Ibid. 21.

³ Ibid. 20.

⁴ Ibid. 22.

much success socially. Her father realizing that he had made a mistake in her bringing up, saw that she lived too much in her books, and was therefore, unable to appear well in society. She had studied some at the ~~then~~ celebrated school of Dr. Park in Boston, but now her father decided to send her to the girls' school of the Misses Prescott at Groton. Here, according to her own account, she suffered much because of her social eccentricities and inability to mix well with the other girls of the school. She, however, improved much in these respects while here, and returned home after two years much benefitted socially by her experiences. She writes, however, later on, concerning her teachers taken altogether.

"I was now in the hands of teachers, who had not, since they came on the earth put to themselves one intelligent question as to their business here. . . . They, no doubt, injured those who accepted the husks they proffered for bread and believed that the exercise of the memory was study, and to know what others knew, was the object of study."¹

Upon her return she continued her studies at home, however, after the same manner as before, that is, developing the intellect and neglecting the other natural faculties that go to make up life and character. How industriously she worked and what subjects she covered may be learned from a letter dated July, 1825, and addressed to one of her former teachers at Groton.

¹ Mem. I, 132.

"I rise a little before five, walk an hour, and then practice on the piano till seven, when we breakfast. Next I read French, - Si^Somandi's Literature of the South of Europe, - till eight, then two or three lectures in Brown's Philosophy. About half past nine I go to Mr. Perkin's school and study Greek till twelve, when, the school being dismissed, I recite, go home, and practice again till dinner at two. . . . Then when I can I read two hours in Italian, but am often interrupted. At six I walk or take a drive. Before going to bed I play or sing for half an hour or so, to make all sleepy, and about eleven retire to write a little while in my journal, exercises on what I have read, or a series of characteristics which I am filling up according to advice. Thus you see I am learning Greek and making acquaintance with metaphysics, and French and Italian literature."¹

The next year we find her reading Madame de Staël, for whom she felt much enthusiasm, Epictetus, Milton, Racine, and the Castilian ballads. During the next two years she makes the acquaintance of Locke, and reads Madame de Staël's comments on his system. Among many other books on various subjects, she reads Russell's Tour of Germany, which she calls "a most interesting book".

From the accounts above we may fairly judge that she covered in her studies, up to the time she was twenty-two years old (1832), more or less thoroughly, the whole field of English, Latin, French, Spanish and Italian literatures, besides dipping

¹ Mem. I, 52f.

somewhat into Greek and philosophy.

Emerson, however, makes a note that when she came to Concord, about 1835, she was little read in Shakespeare. This is important, for the one author who could best have developed the side of her nature so much neglected, that is, her feelings and inner life, she rather slighted.

Of the good effects of her study of all these authors and this mass of literature, she writes; "They taught me to distrust all invention which is not based on a wide experience". But, she added: "Perhaps, too, they taught me to overvalue an outward experience at the expense of inward growth; but all this I did not appreciate until later."¹

In the last sentence Margaret Fuller sums up the chief fault of her early education: a mere training of the intellect to the neglect of the inner life.

Very interesting it is to study Margaret Fuller's early religious training in her home, and the attitude she took toward the orthodox church of the day. Mrs. Howe describes the orthodox churchman as a "stern Presbyterian with his dogmas and his tasks work, the city circle and the college with their niggard conceptions and unfeeling stare."² The orthodox church seems to have failed utterly to satisfy the wants and longings of her inner life.

¹ Mem. I, 30f.

² Howe, 123.

Of Sunday, she writes "The day was punctiliously set apart in our house. . . . The day was pleasing to me, as relieving me from the routine of tasks and recitations. . . still the church going where I heard nothing that had any connection with my inward life, and these rules, gave me associations with the day of empty formalities, and arbitrary restrictions; but, though the forbidden book always seemed more charming then, I was seldom tempted to disobey".¹

How strictly Margaret, then but a little girl, was held to these "arbitrary rules" may be gathered from a description of her experience upon the occasion of her first acquaintance with Shakespeare. She had taken down a volume of his works one winter Sunday afternoon and become deeply interested in "Romeo and Juliet". Her father, taking notice, asked what book she was reading. "Shakespeare", she answered. "Shakespeare!" - that won't do; that's no book for Sunday; go put it away and take another". She put it away, but her deep interest in the characters whose acquaintance she had just made tempted her to take the book again. When asked a second time what she was reading, she answered, "Shakespeare". "How?" answered her father, angrily, "Give me the book and go directly to bed". She went, but could not sleep, because "her fancies swarmed like bees", as she contrived the remainder of the story she had begun. Soon her father came in to argue the case with her, but to no avail. She could feel no sympathies with these empty rules and

¹ Mem. I, 26.

formalities; but did with this play, where, she writes, there was a "free flow of life and brought home the life I seemed born to live".¹

Again, at the age of fifteen, she mentions in a letter, July, 1825, her disinclination to go to church. "Having excused myself from accompanying my honored father to church, which I always do in the afternoon when possible. . ."2

Perhaps the strongest statement of her distaste and revulsion against the Puritan theology and religious customs is in the following passage.

"It was Thanksgiving Day (November, 1831), and I was obliged to go to church or exceedingly displease my father. I almost always suffered much in church from a feeling of disunion with the hearers, and dissent from the preacher; but today, more than ever before, the service jarred upon me from their grateful and joyful tone."³

However much Margaret Fuller felt at variance with the church she, nevertheless, sought earnestly to find comfort for her inner life in the regular orthodox religion. This is shown in the continuation of the description of her experiences on this same Thanksgiving Day. Wearied out with mental conflicts and in a sad frame of mind, she walked for relief and to be alone

¹ Mem. I, 26f.

² Ibid, 52.

³ Ibid. 139.

in the fields. The sky, the clouds, the sunshine suddenly bursting through and flooding her surroundings "with a transparent sweetness, like the last smiles of a dying lover",¹ made her feel herself nearer to the Divine Being, and seem for the moment reconciled.

But if we read closely this description, we see clearly that her feeling is rather a momentary resignation of self, than one of lasting comfort and inspiration. It is a giving up of her dearest hopes, an effacing of all individuality and finding a temporary happiness in this mystic negation of soul. "I saw", she writes, "there was no real self, . . . that it was only because I thought self real that I suffered; that I had only to live in the idea of the All and all was mine. In that true ray most of the relations of earth seemed mere films, phenomena".²

It is very readily seen that had this temporary "inspiration", as one of her biographers calls it, this negation of self, been permanent, and had she remained in this frame of mind and state of feeling, beautiful as it all seemed to her then, her development would have stopped right there, and she never would have become the strong positive force, the energetic character that we know her.

This does not mean that Margaret Fuller had no deep religious instincts, for she did have, as will be shown later, and as is shown by the numerous prayers quoted by her biographers.

¹ Mem. I, 140.

² Ibid. 141.

She, too, was as capable of enjoying a good humanitarian sermon, full of thought and encouragement, a sermon that bore a real relation to her inner life, as anybody. She has left on record many beautiful tributes to such men as Emerson, Dr. Channing, W. H. Channing, and J. F. Clarke. But it is true that she was in open dissent against the narrow dogmatism of the Puritan Church.

Aside from the fact that she was not orthodox, it is hard to say just what her religious belief was at this period. Somewhat later, after she had studied German a year or so, in answer to a letter from J. F. Clarke, in which he seems to have enquired after her religious life and belief, she says: "Very early I knew that the only object in life was to grow". She further states that though she had "often been false to this knowledge in idolatries of particular objects", ¹ she had never lost sight of this aim. Mr. Clarke, however, warns us, as do Margaret Fuller's other biographers, that she did not have merely a selfish purpose in this aim of self culture. What she wanted was the realization of the full development of her highest natural powers, both for her own good, and to enable her better to carry out her ideals and undertakings in life, which were indeed noble and public-spirited enough.

In a letter dated May 4, 1830, Margaret Fuller describes how she would like to see a person of genius developed. We may take for granted that she herself would like to be brought to a full realization of life and her powers in the same way.

¹ Mem. I, 133.

"I have often wished to see among us", she writes, "such a person of genius as the nineteenth century can afford - i.e. one who has tasted in the morning of existence the extremes of good and ill, both imaginative and real. I had imagined such a person endowed by nature with that acute sense of Beauty, (i.e., Harmony or Truth) and that vast capacity of desire which gives soul to love and ambition. . . . I would have him go on steadily, feeding his mind with congenial love, hopefully confident that if he only nourished his existence into perfect life. Fate would at fitting season furnish an atmosphere and orbit meet for his breathing and exercise. I wished he might adore, not fever for, the bright phantoms of his mind's creation, and believe them but the shadows of external things to be met with hereafter. After this steady intellectual growth had brought his powers to manhood, so far as the ideal can do it, I wished this being might be launched into the world of realities, his heart glowing with the ardor of an immortal toward perfection, his eyes searching everywhere to behold it; I wished he might collect into one burning point those withering, palsyng convictions which, in the ordinary routine of things, so gradually pervade the soul; that he might suffer in brief space, agonies of disappointment commensurate with his unpreparedness and confidence. And I thought, thus thrown back on the representing pictorial resources I supposed him originally to possess, with such material, and the need he must feel of using it, such a man would suddenly dilate into a form of Pride, Power, and Glory, a centre round which

asking, aimless hearts might rally, - a man fitted to act as interpreter to the one tale of many-languaged eyes!"¹

It is interesting to note how she longs after just such a development of character as she finds later in the great characters of Goethe, in "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister". However, beyond a mere longing after such a development, she seems at this period not to have made any progress toward a realization of this ideal.

In concluding this chapter we find Margaret Fuller at the age of twenty-two (1832) a girl of high sensibilities, with a lively, active mind. Her intellect, however, has been developed out of all proportion to her other powers, in fact, to the neglect of these; or in her own words, her "true life . . . was secluded and veiled over by a thick curtain of available knowledge".²

The orthodox church, too, had failed to satisfy her spiritual needs, in fact, had repelled her ^{with} ~~by~~ its empty formalities, narrow dogmas, controversial sermons, and arbitrary restrictions. We saw also that she had a yearning for a deeper inner experience and growth, "a full development of her whole nature by means of a full experience in life".³ But that her inner nature had not yet been called out.

¹ Mem. I, 69f.

² Ibid. 18.

³ Ibid. 132.

"How little", writes Julia Ward Howe, "were the beauties of her mind, the ~~guess~~ of her character, guessed at or sought for by those who saw in her unlikeness to the popular or fashionable type of the time matter only for derisive comment".¹

It will be the object of the following chapter to show how she supplemented her early, very imperfect education by the teaching of her great second school-master, Goethe. We shall see with what enthusiasm she studied the "Great Sage", as she calls him, how she took up, assimulated, and made her own what she found, until it became a part of her own nature, and thus rounded out her character and personality, until it reached its highest development and truest proportions.

¹ Howe, 47.

Chapter II.

Study of German.

Margaret Fuller began the study of German in 1832 while she was living at Cambridge, only a few minutes' walk from Harvard College. She had already become acquainted with the masterpieces of French, Italian, and Spanish literature before this time.

"But all this amount of reading", writes Mr. Clarke, "had made her¹ deep learned in books and shallow in herself". "Her Latin studies", too, says Caroline H. Dall, one of Margaret Fuller's associates and the editor of one of her works, "rather² injured than developed her brilliant fancies".

Margaret Fuller probably became interested in German for the first time through the works of Madame de Staël, whom she mentions as early as May 1826. She calls her "Brilliant", and "useful too, but it is on a grand scale, on liberalizing, regenerating principles"³. The next year she mentions her again. From this brilliant woman's works she must have got acquainted with the Weimar circle, Goethe, Schiller, Herdër, etc. In fact Weimar is mentioned by her in a letter Jan. 1829. She read, too, "Russell's Tour in Germany" in which she found some interesting material about German universities. But the greatest incitement and the immediate cause for her study of German were, according to J.F. Clarke, the romantic articles of

¹
Mem. I. 112.

²
Margaret and Her Friends. 7.

³
Mem. I. 55.

Thomas Carlyle on Goethe, Schiller, and Richter, which appeared in the old 'Foreign Review' , 'The Edinburg Review', and later in the 'Foreign Quarterly'. Both she and Mr. Clarke were attracted to this literature at the same time.

'I believe' , says he, 'that in about three months from the time that Margaret commenced German, she was reading with ease the masterpieces of its literature. Within the year she had read Goethe's 'Faust', 'Tasso' , 'Iphigenie', 'Hermann und Dorothea' , 'Elective Affinities' , and 'Memoirs'; Tieck's 'William Lovel' , 'Prince Zerbino' , and other works; Körner, Novalis, and something of Richter; all of Schiller's principal dramas, and his lyric poetry'.¹

Margaret Fuller never took any formal instruction in German, but was for the most part, except as to pronunciation, her own teacher. This is shown by the following two passages, the first from her diary of Jan. 1833, in which she writes:

'I have now a pursuit of immediate importance; to the German language and literature I will give my undivided attention. I have made rapid progress for one quite unassisted'.²

The second is from a letter to Emerson December, 1842:

'Italian, as well as German, I learned by myself, unassisted, except as to pronunciation'.³

Her ability to comprehend the underlying principles and meaning of each author she studied, and to see the fine distinct-

¹
Mem. I. 114.

²
Margaret Fuller's Diary, 1833, quoted by Higginson. 41.

³
Mem. I, 241.

ions between them must have been little short of marvelous. This trait is dwelt on in this connection by Mr. Clarke at some length:

"The first and most striking element in the genius of Margaret was the clear, sharp understanding, which keenly distinguished between things different, and kept every thought, opinion, person, character in its own place, not to be confounded with any other.... Every writer whom she studied, as every person whom she knew, she placed in his own class, knew his relation to other writers, to the world, to life, to nature, to herself"¹.

Margaret Fuller grew up and lived almost within the shadow of Harvard College. This was very fortunate for her at this period, for it enabled her to associate in Harvard circles and meet distinguished men and scholars who had been abroad and studied in Germany, and others who had been the pupils of these men at Harvard. German scholarship and the study of German was arousing a great deal of interest at Harvard at this time, for George Ticknor and Edward Everett had come from Germany where they had studied, enthusiastic for German and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of German scholarship. But three men who undoubtedly influenced Margaret Fuller most in the study of German, were Charles Follen, Frederick Henry Hedge, and James Freeman Clarke.

Dr. Charles Follen, who had already won a reputation as a scholar abroad and who had come over to America as a political exile from Germany, was a most broad-minded, public-spirited, and

¹
Mem. I. 113.

talented man, of the broadest republican principles, and one of our first great and most enthusiastic anti-slavery advocates, a man who has as yet unfortunately not received the general recognition due him. He taught at this time German, ecclesiastical history, and ethics in Harvard College. His presence and celebrity as a scholar must undoubtedly have contributed considerable to the rise of interest in German literature in Cambridge and Boston at just this time, for writes Mr. Higginson to Miss Edith Fuller, Margaret Fuller's niece, Feb. 1909: "Every one who knew him was his friend".

Margaret Fuller must have met him quite often, for they associated in the same circles. But his greatest influence on her came indirectly through one of his pupils, Margaret Fuller's most intimate friend and kinsman, James Freeman Clarke, who was indebted to Dr. Follen in many ways.

Of great personal assistance to Margaret Fuller was Rev. Frederick Henry Hedge, who had studied several years in Germany. He was an ardent friend of the Fuller family, and a contributor to Margaret Fuller's biography, "A fountain of knowledge in the way of German". From him she borrowed chiefly her German books, and discussed with him by letter, and doubtless also orally, what she has read. He also, Miss Edith Fuller writes, probably helped her some with her pronunciation. "His conversation", says Mr. J. F. Clarke, "was full of interest and excitement for her. He opened to her a whole world of thoughts and speculations

which gave movement to her mind in a congenial direction''.¹

But the one who deserves most to be mentioned in this connection is James Freeman Clarke, the great Unitarian preacher, author, and anti-slavery advocate, who had studied under Dr. Follen. He had already received a degree from Harvard College, and was now a student in the theological seminary. Nevertheless he still kept up, as he did nearly all his life, a lively interest in German, especially Goethe, of whose influence on him Dr. Edward Everett Hale writes:

'But especially was he reading Goethe. And afterwards, in referring to those happy days, he would always speak with enthusiasm of the larger life which opened upon so many of them,² under Goethe's lead''.

It was probably Mr. Clarke chiefly who taught Margaret Fuller the German pronunciation, since W.H. Channing writes: 'He was her constant companion in exploring the rich gardens³ of German literature''.

In speaking of this period Mr. Clarke, himself, says: 'She needed a friend to whom to speak of her studies, to whom to express the ideas which were dawning and taking shape in her mind. She accepted me for this friend''.⁴

Again Mr. Clarke writes: 'Almost every evening I saw her, and heard an account of her studies''. Then referring to the good effects of these, her studies in German literature, he con-

¹
Mem. I. 90

²
Autobiography, Diary, and Correspondence of James Freeman Clarke. 91.

³
Mem. II. 8.

⁴
Mem. I. 62.

tinues in the two following passages:

'Her mind opened under this influence, as the apple blossom at the end of a warm week in May. The thought, the beauty of this rich literature equally filled her mind and fascinated her imagination'¹.

How these studies awakened, quickened and enlivened her whole being will be seen from the following by the same writer:

'With what eagerness did she seek for knowledge! What fire, what exuberance, what reach, grasp, overflow of thought shone in her conversation!.... To me it <His association with her at this time> was a gift of the gods, an influence like no other'².

This was a period 'with great intensity of inner life' for her, writes Mr.Hedge, for 'she read with the heart', and had 'a passionate love for the beautiful, which comprehended all the kingdoms of nature and art'³. She 'framed an acquaintance with Goethe, who was destined in no small degree to influence her future life, and who was particularly important to her at this period, as an aim and a solace in retirement'⁴.

'I recall other mornings < somewhat later on >', writes Mr.Clarke, 'when not having seen her for a week or two, I would walk with her for hours, beneath the lindens, or in the garden, while we related to each other what we had read in our

¹
Mem.I.114.

²
Mem.I.62.

³
Mem.I.93.

⁴
Margaret Fuller MSS in Boston Public Library.

German studies. And I always left her astonished at the progress of her mind, at the amount of new thoughts she had garnered, and filled with a sense of the worth of knowledge, and the value of life¹'.

The last sentence is significant. Life began to take on a different meaning for her under the vivifying influence of the new thoughts she had garnered. Her inner life, so long neglected, began to develop, and her personality to exert itself more than ever. These thoughts became a part of her innermost soul and being. What she read had a living interest for her. 'Authors and their personages', says Mr. Clarke, 'were no ideal beings² merely, but full of human blood and life'.

The amount of reading Margaret Fuller did in German, both in Cambridge and in Groton, was simply marvelous. 'I am having one of my 'intense' times', she writes from Groton, 'devouring book after book. I never stop a minute except to talk with mother'³. But the works of the different authors did not affect her equally. Lessing's dramas she reads and thus criticizes, 'Well conceived and sustained characters, interesting situations.....I think him easily followed; strong but not deep'. With Novalis she was charmed, for, in common with her associates, she had a Romantic note in her temperament. 'The good Novalis',

¹
Mem.I.108.

²
Mem.I.114.

³
Mem.I.164.

she says, 'a wondrous youth' , then quoting Goethe's phrase,
''whose life was so full and so still ''¹. His ''onesided im-
perfection and glow'' is a relief, ''is refreshingly human,
after feeling the immense superiority of Goethe''. She wants
to keep a Novalis journal for one of her friends, and to devote
two articles in a series on German literature in a proposed
literary Magazine, to him and her favorite Körner for whom she
was probably inspired by Dr.Follen. Körner ''charms'' her, and²
''has become a fixed star in the heaven of her thought''.
''Great is my love for both of them < Novalis and Körner > '' ,
she says. Tieck seems to her so important that she wishes to
devote at least eight numbers in the same proposed periodical,
should it appear. Of Jean Paul Richter's ''pages'' she wishes
to ''make a book, or , as he would say, bind me a bouquet
from his pages and wear it on my heart of hearts'' , to refresh
her ''wearied inward sense with its exquisite fragrance''. ''I³
must have improved'' , she concludes, ''to love him as I do''.
She translates into verse and quotes from him beautiful passages.
Heine, too, and Uhland, from whom she also translates, are well
known to her. She studies Buhle's and Tennemann's histories of
Philosophy, and reads Fichte and Jacobi. Fichte she cannot
understand. Jacobi she understands in detail, but not in system.
His mind, she thinks, with marvelous intuition, is moulded by

¹
Mem.I.118 f.

²
Mem.I.120.

³
Mem.I.130.

some other mind, perhaps Spinoza, with whom she thinks she ought to get acquainted to know Jacobi well. Later she studies Spinoza and discusses him with Parker. Herschel, too, she studies at the advice of Professor Farrar, and "really believes" she is "a little wiser" as a result. Eichhorn and Jahn she studies a little later on, and in 1836 translates for Dr. Channing, Herder and De Wette.

But for none of these authors was her admiration so strong as that for Schiller. She early reads all his principal dramas and his lyric poetry, and later much of his prose works. So fascinated did she become with his works and the characters he created that she once wrote, "I don't like Goethe so well as Schiller now, I mean I am not so happy in reading him. That perfect wisdom and merciless nature seems cold, after those¹ seducing pictures of forms more beautiful than truth". She mentions him many times throughout her works and in her letters, and quotes from him often.

But the power that truly marks an epoch in the development of her inner life, the influence greater than all the others combined, the guiding star which sheds light on her whole subsequent career and led her into a new world of thought and feeling, was Goethe. In his masterly analysis of Margaret Fuller's character and larger inner life, Emerson writes:

"Dante, Petrarca, Tasso, were her friends among the old poets, - for to Ariosto she assigned a far lower place. - Alfieri

¹
Mem. I. 117.

and Manzoni, among the new. But what was of still more import to her education, she had read German books, and, for the three years before I knew her, almost exclusively, - Lessing, Schiller, Richter, Tieck, Novalis, and, above all, Goethe. It was very obvious at the first intercourse with her, though her rich and busy mind never reproduced undigested reading, that the last writer, - food or poison, - the most powerful of all mental reagents, - the pivotal mind in modern literature, - for all before him are ancients, and all who have read him are moderns, - that this mind had been her teacher, and, of course, the place was filled, nor was there room for any other. She had that symptom which appears in all students of Goethe, an ill dissembled contempt of all criticism on him which they hear from others, as if it were totally irrelevant''....

''The effect on Margaret was complete. She was perfectly timed to it. She found her moods met, her topics treated, the liberty of thought she loved, the same climate of mind. Of course, this book superseded all others, for the time, and tinged deeply all her thoughts. The religion, the science, the catholicism, the worship of art, the mysticism and daemonology, and withal the clear recognition of moral distinctions as final and eternal, all charmed her; and Faust, and Tasso, and Mignon, and Makaria, and Iphigenia, became irresistable names. It was

one of those agreeable historical coincidences, perhaps invariable, though not yet registered, the simultaneous appearance of a teacher and of pupils, between whom exists a strict affinity. Nowhere did Goethe find a braver, more intelligent, or more sympathetic reader".¹

Mr. Higginson in his work on Margaret Fuller quotes a line from a manuscript letter, to show that the greatest good that Goethe did her was to make her think. One is, however, at a loss to understand how Mr. Higginson could attempt to disprove any great influence of Goethe on Margaret Fuller, on the evidence of this single broken line;² especially when the sentence quoted is preceded by one expressing a doubtful mood, "I scarce know how to answer you", and followed, or rather completed by the complimentary remark, "a wonderful artist who gratifies my taste".³ It is inconceivable how he could come to the conclusion he does after reading what Margaret Fuller herself says; (given in the passage following), and the testimony just quoted from Emerson, who certainly knew Margaret Fuller, heart and soul, and of the truth of whose characterization Horace Greeley said, that it deserved the praise of being called the fairest and frankest of our day, "exhibiting its subject exactly as she lived and moved among us some years ago".⁴

¹ Mem. I, 242 f.

² Higginson, 284.

³ MSS of Margaret Fuller in Boston Public Library.

⁴ Introd. to Papers on Literature and Art, p. 1.

There are other passages here and there throughout her works that give evidence of a reminiscence or a residue still in her nature of the Puritan doctrines, born and bred in her from many generations. This part of her nature continually struggled for utterance against the broader and more comprehensive views of life taught by Goethe. Then, too, an enormous outside pressure was brought to bear on her in the same direction, since so far as spiritual teaching and rigorous asceticism is concerned the Transcendentalists had much in common with their Puritan ancestors. These combined inner and outer forces in Margaret Fuller's case, therefore, were not wholly without effect. It is this that makes her lean at times toward an unemotional spirituality and rigorism like that of Emerson, which ordinarily she condemned in him. This characteristic of her nature, too, probably led her to utter the passage upon which Dr. H. C. Goddard lays so much, in fact entirely too much, emphasis.¹ It is also because of this struggle within her inner being that she sometimes fails to do Goethe and his principles justice, and here and there makes contradictory statements concerning her relation to him. That this struggle lasted at least until a few years before the end of her life is evident from her letters, her preface to the translation of "Goethe's Conversations with Eckermann," and from the last one of her two articles on Goethe in the "Dial".²

¹
Studies in New England Transcendentalism. 1037.

²
Dial Vol. II. No. 1. 1841. Life Without and Life Within
23 ff.

Nowhere is the evidence of this struggle in her inner being clearer than in this last named article, nor the victory of the Goethean spirit more supreme. We can only judge that in all other cases like this something similar took place, i.e. there was a momentary struggle. But if we study her doctrine of character-building, her relation to her friends, her acts, in short, her whole life and development, we see that, consciously or unconsciously < probably for the most part unconsciously > she was, as Emerson correctly says, a most faithful pupil and follower of Goethe.

After true Puritan fashion she speaks at the beginning of the article in the 'Dial' of Goethe's 'intellect too much developed in proportion to the moral nature' , 'Naturally of a deep mind and a shallow heart' , 'Wanting in sweetness of piety' , and 'cold, setting himself apart from his true peers, the real sovereigns of Weimar, - Herder, Wieland and the others!'¹ But almost immediately after her first statement she thrusts in a doubt to soften and tone it down, saying: 'It is difficult to speak < thus of such men as Goethe > without seeming narrow, blind and impertinent, For ... if you feel a want of a faculty in them, it is hard to say they have it not, lest next moment they puzzle you by giving you some indication of it.'² And in a passage from a letter, already quoted, she says the

¹ Life Without and Life Within 23 ff.

² ibid. 24.

same thing of Goethe more directly: "Yet often when suspecting that I have found a huge gap, the next turning and there is a brick all ready to stop it"¹. Only a few passages further in the article in speaking of Goethe's "Tasso", she no longer feels what she has written at the beginning and praises highly the tenderness, the "depth and fulness" which Goethe has given to Tasso's character, and his "entire abandonment to the highest nature".

"But you say", she continues, "there is no likeness between Goethe and Tasso. Never believe it; such pictures are not painted from observation merely. That deep coloring which fills them with life and light is given by dipping the brush in one's own life-blood"².

This surely is not in harmony with her accusation that Goethe was "cold" and of a "shallow heart", or too intellectual. Two pages further Margaret Fuller praises the "wise mind of the Duchess Amalia" for giving the first impulse to Goethe's "noble course" at Weimar, contradicting exactly what she said of his course here at the beginning of the article.³

A little further her feeling for Goethe becomes still stronger. "One is ashamed", she writes, "when finding any fault with one like Goethe, who is so great. It seems the only criticism should be to do all he omitted to do, and that none

¹
Mem.I.167.

²
Life Without and Life Within 28.

³
ibid. 31.

who cannot ¹is entitled to say a word''.

Just a little further after defending most vigorously the ''Elective Affinities'' , against all the absurd and bitter criticism heaped upon it, and losing herself, heart and soul in the sweetness and purity of the character of Ottilia, she says, even before taking up such a character as Goethe's Iphigenie:

''At this moment, remembering what I then < at the beginning of the article > felt, I am inclined to close all my negations just written on this paper as stuff, and look upon myself, for thinking them, with as much contempt as Mr. Carlyle, or Mrs. Austin, or Mrs. Jameson might do, to say nothing of the German Goetheans''.²

At the end of the article after analyzing ''Iphigenie'' , she calls Goethe ''the brightest star in a new constellation'' and closes by appealing to her readers, in Goethe's behalf:

''Let us enter into his highest tendency, thank him for such angels as Iphigenie, whose simple truth mocks at all his wise ''Beschränkungen'' < so called >, and hope the hour when, girt about by many such, he will confess, contrary to his opinion, given in his latest days, that it is well worth while to live seventy years, if only to find that they are nothing in the sight of God''.³

After reading this it would seem perfectly absurd to claim

¹
Life Within and Life Without, 45.
²ibid. 51.

³
ibid. 60.

that Margaret Fuller at this period < 1841 > was no longer favorably inclined toward Goethe, or an enthusiastic admirer of him, or that his powerful influence was no longer exerted upon her. One might, if having read nothing else of hers be almost tempted to believe she simply made the statements in the beginning of her article, statements so common in New England at the time against the great poet, in order to tear them to pieces later on and prove the contrary. Especially strong is this temptation after reading her masterly defense of Goethe in her article just preceding this one, against Wolfgang Menzel, whose criticism attacking Goethe had been translated by Professor Felton of Harvard College, one of Goethe's numerous enemies in this country. It is true that Margaret Fuller did not slavishly follow and imitate Goethe. "'Her rich and busy mind'", in the words of Emerson, was never paralyzed in the presence of her great master, nor did she "'ever reproduce undigested reading'". She was too original for that, and her personality too strong. She did not cease thinking on her own part nor did she give up in any way her intellectual independence. The most beneficent influence that any great poet or thinker can exercise upon us, is not to cause us to follow vassal-like in his train, but to stimulate, to inspire in us great and noble thoughts, to call out all the latent energies and powers of the soul, and to develop them to a greater degree of perfection and independence. This is what Goethe did chiefly for Margaret Fuller.

Goethe had above all other poets the special faculty and power to free and call out most forcibly the ego , the real "'I'" In fact nobody has ever been so powerful to develop the personality in his followers, or as he calls them, his "'Gemeinde'", as he . This is clearly pointed out in an extract from the lectures of Rudolph Hildebrand on Goethe's lyric poetry, published in the Goethe Jahrbuch < Vol.XXII , 205 ff.> by Julius Goebel. It is shown here how Goethe rediscovered that which is the real human part in man, the mainspring of character and personality, so long lost sight of and buried under the heap of debris of mere intellectual knowledge, which had accumulated for ages. He rediscovered the inner life in man, the real motive forces in the soul, that go to make up character. Goethe showed that this force does not consist in, - nor is the result of, - mere knowledge, but that it is the very essence of our personality: "'das Unerkannteste und Unerkennbarste, und doch Gewisseste in uns'" , which he, as a poet intends to bring out and to liberate by appealing to the heart, to the whole inner soul of man.

Here is the whole secret: - Mind and heart, will and emotions must both be called out, reconciled and go hand in hand. For it is this that makes up character and develops a harmonious personality. Thus Goethe may justly call himself a liberator:

'Von Franzen hat er < Blücher > euch befreit,
Ich von Philisternetzen'¹.

¹ Goethe's Werke, Hempel ed. III, 267.

How he accomplishes this liberation of our Ego can be seen especially in his lyric poetry, where he succeeds in awakening our innermost feeling.

'Denn edlen Seelen vorzufühlen ¹
Ist wünschenswertester Beruf'',

he says in the poem Vermächtniss, describing his mission as a poet. Few persons felt his liberating influence deeper than did Margaret Fuller. How ready and ripe she really was for the full force and effect of an appeal which called for the development of the whole being is seen from her letter quoted in the last pages of the preceding chapter of this present treatise .

It is most remarkable how entirely carried away Margaret Fuller was with Goethe, how she, docile as a child, reads and imbibes some part of the ''Great Sage's'' teaching every day, and how completely he fills her mind and heart. The following passages show most conclusively how deeply she was affected , how she was practically re-educated, mind and soul; and how, especially her feelings and inner life are awakened and called out; and finally, how she ^eemerged from these years of the study of the great sage an altered being, and the strong personality she was. She writes in 1832:

'It seems to me as if the mind of Goethe had embraced the universe. I have felt this lately in reading his lyric poems. I am enchanted while I read. He comprehends every feeling

¹
Goethes Werke, Hempel ed. III, 192.

I have ever had so perfectly, expresses it so beautifully; but when I shut the book, it seems to me as if I had lost my personal identity; all my feelings linked with such an immense variety that belongs to beings I had thought so different. What can I bring? There is no answer in my mind, except 'It is so' , or 'It will be so' , or 'No doubt such and such feel so'. Yet, while my judgement becomes daily more tolerant toward others, the same attracting and repelling work is going on in my feelings. But I persevere in reading the great sage, some part of every day, hoping the time will come, when I shall not feel so overwhelmed, and leave off this habit of wishing to grasp the whole, and be contented to learn a little every day, as becomes a pupil''¹.

In another passage, written the following year , the same longing for a further inner development, as ''Nature intended'', is clearly expressed. She would like to go to Goethe in her perplexity and accept him both as a wise friend and a guide.

'How often have I thought, if I could see Goethe, and tell him my state of mind, he would support and guide me. He would be able to understand; he would show me how to rule circumstances, instead of being ruled by them; and, above all, he would not have been so sure that all would be for the best, without our making an effort to act out the oracles; he would have wished to see me what Nature intended''².

¹
Mem.I.119.

²
ibid.I.122.

'I constantly think of Goethe' , she writes again, 'while I see life overgrowing thought as soon as it has expressed it. He is the light of the age, vivid. I learn all the other men from him and him from them'¹.

In the following passage, written in 1833, in an hour of sadness while she is watching beside the sick-bed, Goethe is the guide and solace for her soul:

'When not with -- , in whose room I sit sewing and waiting upon him, or reading aloud a great part of the day, I solace my soul with Goethe, and follow his guidance into realms of the 'Wahren, Guten, and Schönen'. '²

In another letter Margaret Fuller speaks of the inspiration she received from Goethe, and the fresh impulse for action and for exerting her personality; in short 'to live as she did'.

'Three or four afternoons I have passed very happily at my beloved haunt in the wood, reading Goethe's 'second Residence in Rome'. Your pencil marks show that you have been before me. I shut the book each time with an earnest desire to live as he did, - always to have some engrossing object of pursuit. I sympathize deeply with a mind in that state. While mine is being used up by ounces, I wish pailfuls might be poured into it. I am dejected and uneasy when I see no results

¹ Margaret Fuller MSS in Boston Public Library.

² Mem.I.146.

from my daily existence, but I am suffocated and lost when I¹ have not the bright feeling of progression''.

Writing of the remaining works of Goethe which she had not yet read, but was now reading, <she read probably in all fifty-five volumes of Goethe, the number Emerson had in his library, and of which she makes use at this time>, she says:

'I have with me those works of Goethe which I had not yet read. I am now reading ''Kunst und Altertum'' and ''Campagne in Frankreich''. I still prefer reading Goethe to anybody else, and as I proceed find more and more to learn, and feel, too, that my general idea of his mind was less perfect² than I had supposed, and needs testing and sifting''.

Three years later, though she has lost some of her first ardor for Goethe, and has not yet entirely succeeded in sounding the depth of his philosophy of life she is still willing to follow his lead.

'I do not know our Goethe yet' , she writes, 'I have changed my opinion about his religious views many times, Yet often when suspecting that I have found a huge gap, the³ next turning, and there is a brick all ready to stop it''. She is ready still ''to try his philosophy and if needs must, play the eclectic''.

¹
Mem.I.121 f.

²
Margaret Fuller MSS in Boston Public Library; also Mem.I.147.Higginson 44 f.

³
Mem.I.167.

Her enthusiasm went even further, so far in fact that she earnestly desired her friends to share it with her. "It is my earnest wish", she writes, "to interpret the German authors of whom I am most fond to such Americans as are ready to receive.... I hope a periodical may arise, by and by, which may think me worthy to furnish a series of articles on German literature giving room enough and perfect freedom to say what I please"¹.

Her opinions of Goethe's doctrines are so well grounded that she wrote when seeking material for her "Life of Goethe": "Of course my impression of Goethe's works cannot be influenced by information I get about his life". About the same time she calls him in the Preface to her translation of "Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe" My parent"².

On her birthday, 1836, when reading Goethe's "Lebensregeln", she concludes, "I will endeavor to profit by the instruction of the great philosopher, who teaches, I think, what Christ did, to use without overvaluing the world"³.

The following passage, written probably some years later, shows how clearly she saw the great development that had taken place in her character and personality, as a result of these her studies and inner experiences.

¹
Mem.I.168.

²
Translator's Preface to "Eckermann's Conversations with Goethe", page XIX.

"I mourned" , she writes, "that I never should have a thorough experience of life, never know the full riches of my being; I was proud that I was to test myself in the sternest way, that I was always to return to myself, to be my own priest, pupil, parent, child, husband, and wife. All this I did not understand as I do now; but this destiny of the thinker, and < shall I dare say it? > of the poetic priestess, sibylline, dwelling in the cave, or amid the Lybian sands, lay yet enfolded in my mind. Accordingly, I did not look on any of the persons, brought into relation with me, with common womanly¹ eyes".

As late as her editorship of the "'Dial'" < 1840-42 > she writes:

"He < Goethe > obliges us to live and grow, that we may walk by his side; vainly we strive to leave him behind in some niche of the hall of our ancestors; a few steps onward and we find him again, of yet serener eye and more towering mien than² on his other pedestal".

From the evidence in the foregoing passages it is perfectly clear, as Emerson writes, that "'Nowhere did Goethe find a braver, more intelligent, or more sympathetic pupil'", and that "'the effect on Margaret was complete'". Of the permanency

¹
Mem.I.99.

²
Life Within and Life Without'', p.14.

of this influence he says, that by the time he learned to know her well in 1836, the main problems of human life had been scanned, interrogated, and settled by her. One of her greatest desires had been a development according to nature, a rounding out of her whole being. Here in her study of Goethe, as we saw, she found "her moods met", the suggestions she needed, and the opportunity she sought. A new light fell upon her soul. The result was as if new blood had rushed through her veins. Her personality developed, her character rounded out, and her mind broadened.

"The infinite curiosity to know individually" was satisfied, and as J. F. Clarke writes, she studied character, and acquired "the power of exerting profoundest influence on individual souls".¹

She was filled with a new impulse for action and a long-ing desire to exert her personality, and to carry into execution her new ideals and plans of life. She writes when studying Goethe and meditating a work on his life:

"It will be long before I can give a distinct, and at the same time concise account of my present state. I believe it is a great era. I am thinking now- really thinking, I believe; certainly it seems as if I had never done so before. If it does not kill me, something will come of it, never was my mind so active; and the subjects are God, the universe, immortality".²

The stamp and effect of her Goethe study was there to stay, and though she later lost a little of her first enthusiasm for the great author, she nevertheless continued to develop, unconscious of this great influence, harmoniously all her higher powers, in exactly the same manner and in the same direction in which this her great second school-master had taught her and put her under way. Her whole life in America, and later in Italy, was in conformity to the great principles which she learned from Goethe.

¹ Memoirs I, 65 f. ² Ibid. 128.

Chapter III

A. Interpretation of Goethe's Works.

B. Translations from Goethe.

Margaret Fuller was more than merely a diligent student of Goethe upon whose inner life his full power was brought to bear with wondrous effect. She was also an unusually clear sighted critic and appreciative interpreter of his works, - from the philosophical, as also from the artistic standpoint. The study of German in America during the fourth and fifth decades of the last century was still in its infancy. It is true there were a few men living in and about Cambridge and Boston at the time who understood Goethe and were very fair interpreters of his works, among them F. H. Hedge, and others connected with Harvard College. But none of these had the powerful influence in this direction that Margaret Fuller had, nor were any so active and aggressive as she in disseminating German ideas and principles, especially those of Goethe.

Just such an influential and appreciative critic of German as she was much needed in America at the time; for the slow progress made in the study of German authors here was partly due, at least, to an inability to understand their real mission to humanity and appreciate the beauty of their works.

But by far the greater part of the misinterpretation, of Goethe's works especially, was due to a strong religious prejudice. Goethe came with a new evangel, and this evangel did not coincide with the Puritan religious ideal. Goethe came with his doctrine of "God-Nature", or to phrase it a little differently, "Sinnlich-Sittlich"; Goethe here took cognizance of one aspect

of human nature that had been neglected by Puritanism, and the religious sects that had their origin in Puritanism, the Unitarians and the Transcendentalists. Goethe believed the sensuous side of the human character, too, should be taken care of, that ^{the} is, emotions and natural inclinations. The orthodox churchman has long believed that this side of human nature was of the "Evil One". The Puritan-minded New Englander, therefore, because he found in Goethe's works much pertaining to the sensuous nature in man cried out in rage and horror against him, calling him a pagan and condemning his works as immoral. Margaret Fuller, who had but a little of the Puritan left in her, who had found her way to freedom and had received a full development of her whole nature and inner life through Goethe, knew better how a New Englander felt, and how to make Goethe's doctrine appeal to him than a native-born German. She was therefore, particularly well adapted to become Goethe's interpreter among her countrymen.

Faust.

The work of Goethe that held the uppermost place in Margaret Fuller's estimation was, of course, "Faust". Of this great drama she says in her second article on Goethe in the "Dial":

"Faust" contains the great idea of life, as indeed there is but one great poetic idea possible to man - the progress of a soul through the various forms of existence.¹

¹ See also Margaret Fuller's Translation of Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", Introd. p. X.

All his other works, whatever their miraculous beauty of execution, are mere chapters to this poem, illustrative of particular points".¹

"The fiercest passions are not so dangerous foes to the soul as the cold scepticism of the understanding. The Jewish demon assailed the man of Uz with physical ills, the Lucifer of the middle ages tempted his passions; but the Mephistopheles of the eighteenth century had the finite strive to compass the infinite, and the intellect attempt to solve all the problems of the soul.

"This path Faust had taken: it is that of modern necromancy. Not willing to grow into God by a steady worship of a life, men would enforce his presence by a spell; not willing to learn his existence by the slow processes of their own, they strive to bind it in a word that they may wear it about the neck as a talisman.

"Faust bent on reaching the center of the universe through the intellect alone, naturally, after a length of trial, which has prevented the harmonious unfolding of his nature, falls into despair. He has striven for one object, and that object eludes him. Returning upon himself, he finds large tracts of his nature lying waste and cheerless. He is too noble for apathy, too wise for vulgar content with the animal enjoyments of life. Yet the thirst he has been so many years increasing is not to be borne. Give me, he cries, but a drop of water to cool my burning tongue. Yet in casting himself with a wild recklessness upon the impulse of his nature yet untried, there is a dis-

¹"Life Without and Life Within", p. 35.

belief that anything short of the All can satisfy the immortal spirit. His first attempt was noble, though mistaken, and under the saving influence of it he makes the compact whose condition cheats the fiend at last."¹

She then quotes the eight lines from "Faust" containing the compact, which she thus translates rather freely:

"Canst thou by falsehood or by flattery
Make me one moment with myself at ease,
Cheat me into tranquility! Come then
And welcome, life's last day.
Make me but to the moment say,
O fly not yet, thou art so fair,
Then let me perish, &c'.

But this condition is never fulfilled. Faust cannot be content with sensuality, with the charlatantry of ambition, nor with riches".² "Faust becomes a wiser, if not a nobler being."³ "His heart never grows callous, nor his moral and intellectual perceptions obtuse. He is saved at last.

With the progress of an individual soul is shadowed forth that of the soul of the age; beginning in intellectual scepticism; sinking into license; cheating itself with dreams of perfect bliss, to be once attained by means no surer than a spurious paper currency; longing itself back from conflict between the spirit and the flesh induced by Christianity; to the Greek era

¹ Life Without and Life Within, 36 ff.

² Ibid. p. 34.

³ Ibid. p. 34.

with its harmonious development of body and mind; striving to re-embody the loved phantom of classical beauty in the heroism of the middle age; flying from the Byron despair of those who die because they cannot soar without wings to schemes however, narrow, of practical utility - redeemed at last through mercy alone".¹

"Margaret", writes Caroline H. Dall, "said (in discussing Faust) the Seeker represents the Spirit of the Age. He never sinned save by yielding, and yet he was emphatically saved by grace. It was difficult to see what Goethe meant until he got to the Tower of the Middle Ages. That made all clear".²

The second part of Faust is full of meaning, resplendent with beauty; but it is rather an appendix to the first part than a fulfillment of its promise. The world remembering the powerful stamp of individual feeling, universal indeed in its application, but individual in its life, which had conquered all its scruples in the first part, was vexed to find, instead of the man Faust, the spirit of the age, - discontented with the shadowy manifestation of truths it longed to embrace, and above all, disappointed that the author no longer met us face to face or riveted the ear by its deep tones of grief and resolve".³

Then she criticises the ideas of the second part of Faust given above:

"When the world shall have got rid of, the still overpowering influence of the first part, it will be seen that the

¹ Life Without and Life Within, 37f.

² Margaret and Her Friends, p. 131f.

³ Life Without and Life Within, p. 38.

fundamental idea is never lost sight of in the second. The change is that Goethe, though the same thinker is no longer the same person".¹

"Goethe borrowed from the book of Job the grand thought of permitted temptation. . . [He] has shown the benefits of deepening individual consciousness. . . [and] left his unfinished leaves [the open questions in the drama] as they fell from his life".²

"By leading a soul through various processes to final redemption, we are made to expect an indication of the steps through which man passes to spiritual purification".³

"The demon of the man of Uz; the facetious familiar of Luther, cracking nuts on the bed-posts, put to flight by hurling an ink-horn; the haughty Satan of Milton, whose force of will is a match for all but Omnipotence; the sorrowful satire of Byron's temper; the cold polished irony of Goethe's Mephistopheles; all mark with admirable precision the state of the age and the mental position of the writer. Man tells his aspirations in his God; but in his demon he shows his depth of experience, and casts light into the cavern through which he worked his course up to the cheerful day".⁴

If we compare the Mephistopheles and Lucifer with the buskined devil of the mob, the goblin with the cloven foot and tail, we realize the vast development of inward life. What a step

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 38.

² "Dial" Vol. III, p. 248f.

³ Ibid, 249.

⁴ Ibid. 257.

from slavish fears of injury or outward retribution to representations, like these, of inward dangers, the pitfalls and fearful dens within our nature, and he who thoughtfully sees the danger begins already to subdue".¹

The character mentioned by Margaret Fuller again and again is Gretchen. Two short passages will suffice here to show how Margaret Fuller thought of and interpreted this charming unfortunate girl.

"Gretchen in a golden cloud is raised above all past delusions, worthy to redeem and upbear the wise man who stumbled into the pit of error while searching for truth".²

"Margaret, by her innocence of heart, and the resolute aversion to the powers of darkness, which her mind in its most shattered state, does not forget, redeems not only her own soul, but that of her erring lover".³

Wilhelm Meister.

"Wilhelm Meister", the work so much abused in New England during Margaret Fuller's life, had a great charm for her, for here she found Goethe's philosophy of the development of human character in its clearest outlines and most complete form. She looked at this work therefore as one of the greatest educational works that the world had ever produced.

¹ "Dial" Vol. III, p. 258.

² Woman in the Nineteenth Century, p. 228.

³ Preface to "Conversations with Goethe", xiii.

For further discussion of Gretchen, see below p.12, 28.

"The continuation of 'Faust' in the practical sense of the education of man", she says, "is to be found in Wilhelm Meister".¹
 "It is to Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Wandering Years that I would especially refer, as these volumes contain the sum of the Sage's observations during a long life, as to what Man should do under present circumstances to obtain mastery over outward, through an initiation into inward life, and severe discipline of faculty".²

The expression "to obtain mastery over outward through an initiation into inward life, etc", is important. Here we have Goethe's whole doctrine of character-building in a nutshell.

Faust and Wilhelm Meister [are] so easily taken captive by the present. I admit the wisdom of this coarse, where, as in Wilhelm Meister, the aim is to suggest the various ways in which the whole nature may be educated through the experiences of this world.

This is the great doctrine which "Wilhelm Meister" had taught her and which she tried to impress upon others.

"Renunciation, the power of sacrificing the temporary for the permanent," she writes again, "is the leading idea in one of his great works, 'Wilhelm Meister'".³

Then continuing in the "Dial", the comparison between "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister", she says:

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 38.

² Woman in the Nineteenth Century, 126f.

³ Preface to "Conversations with Goethe", xiii.

"Here [in "Wilhelm Meister"] we see the change by strongest contrast. The mainspring of action is no longer the impassioned and noble seeker (as in "Faust"), but a disciple of circumstance, whose most marked characteristic is a taste for virtue and knowledge. Wilhelm certainly prefers these conditions of existence to their opposites, but there is nothing so decided in his character as to prevent his turning a clear eye on every part of that variegated world-scene which the writer wished to place before us.

To see all till he knows all sufficiently to put objects into their relations, then to concentrate his powers and use his knowledge under recognized conditions,- such is the progress of man from Apprentice to Master.

"Tis pity that the volumes of the *Wanderjahre* have not been translated entire, as well as those of the *Lehrjahre*, for many, who have read the latter only, fancy that Wilhelm becomes a master in that work. Far from it; he has but just become conscious of the higher powers that have ceaselessly been weaving his fate. Far from being as yet a Master, he now begins to be a Knower. In the *Wanderjahre* we find him gradually learning the duties of citizenship, and hardening into manhood, by applying what he has learned for himself to the education of his child. He converses on equal terms with the wise and beneficent; he is no longer duped and played with for his good, but met directly mind to mind.

Wilhelm is a master when he can command his actions, yet keep his mind always open to new means of knowledge; when he has looked at various ways of living, various forms of religion

and of character, till he has learned to be tolerant of all, discerning of good in all; when the astronomer imparts to his equal ear his highest thoughts, and the poor cottager seeks his aid as a patron and counsellor.

To be capable of all duties, limited by none, with an open eye, a skillful and ready hand, an assured step, a mind deep, calm, foreseeing without anxiety, hopeful without the aid of illusion,--such is the ripe state of manhood. This attained, the great soul should still seek and labor, but strive and battle never more.

The reason for Goethe's choosing so negative a character as Wilhelm, and leading him through scenes of vulgarity and low vice, would be obvious to a person of any depth of thought, even if he himself had not announced it. He thus obtained room to paint life as it really is, and bring forward those slides in the magic lantern which are always known to exist, though they may not be spoken of to ears polite.

Wilhelm cannot abide in tradition, nor do as his fathers did before him, merely for the sake of money or a standing in society. The stage, here an emblem of the ideal life as it gleams before unpracticed eyes, offers, he fancies, opportunity for a life of thought as distinguished from one of routine. Here, no longer the simple citizen, but Man, all Men, he will rightly take upon himself the different aspects of life, till poetwise, he shall have learned them all.

No doubt the attraction of the stage to young persons of a vulgar character is merely the brilliancy of its trappings;

but to Wilhelm, as to Goethe, it was this poetic freedom and daily suggestion which seemed likely to offer such an agreeable studio in the greenroom.

But the ideal must be rooted in the real, else the poet's life degenerates into buffoonery or vice. Wilhelm finds the characters formed by this would-be ideal existence more despicable than those which grew up on the track, dusty and bustling and dull as it had seemed, of common life. He is prepared by disappointment for a higher ambition.

In the house of the count he finds genuine elegance, genuine sentiment, but not sustained by wisdom, or a devotion to important objects. This love, this life, is also inadequate.

Now with Teresa he sees the blessings of domestic peace. He sees a mind sufficient for itself, finding employment and education in the perfect economy of a little world. The lesson is pertinent to the state of mind in which his former experiences have left him, as indeed our deepest lore is won from reaction. But a sudden change of scene introduces him to the society of the sage and learned uncle, the sage and beneficent Natalia. Here he finds the same virtues as with Teresa, and enlightened by a larger wisdom. . . .

The Count de Thorane, a man of powerful character, who made a deep impression on his childhood, was, Goethe says, 'reverenced by me as an uncle'. And the ideal wise man of this common life epic stands before us as "The Uncle".

After seeing the working of just views in the establishment of the uncle, learning piety from the Confessions of a Beau-

tiful Soul, and religious beneficence from the beautiful life of Natalia, Wilhelm is deemed worthy of admission to the society of the illuminati, that is, those who have pierced the secret of life, and know what it is to be and to do.

Here he finds the scroll of his life 'drawn with large, sharp strokes', that is, those truly wise read his character for him, and 'mind and destiny are but two names for one idea'.

He now knows enough to enter on the Wanderjahre.

Goethe always represents the highest principle in the feminine form. Woman is the Minerva, man the Mars. As in the Faust, the purity of Gretchen, resisting the demon always, even after all her faults, is announced to have saved her soul to heaven; and in the second part she appears, not only redeemed herself, but by her innocence and forgiving tenderness hallowed to redeem the being who had injured her.

So in the Meister, these women hover around the narrative, each embodying the spirit of the scene. The frail Philina, graceful though contemptible, represents the degradation incident to an attempt at leading an exclusively poetic life. Mignon, gift divine as ever the Muse bestowed on the passionate heart of man, with her soft, mysterious inspiration, her pining for perpetual youth, represents the high desire that leads to this mistake, as Aurelia, the desire for excitement; Teresa, practical wisdom, gentle tranquility, which seem most desirable after the Aurelia glare. Of the beautiful soul of Natalia we have already spoken. The former embodies what was suggested to Goethe by the most spiritual person he knew in youth-Mademoiselle

von Klettenberg, over whom, as he said, in her invalid loneliness the Holy Ghost brooded like a dove.

Entering on the Wanderjahre, Wilhelm becomes acquainted with another woman, who seems the complement of all the former, and represents the idea which is to guide and mould him in the realization of all the past experience.

This person, long before we see her, is announced in various ways as a ruling power. She is the last hope in cases of difficulty, and though an invalid, and living in absolute retirement, is consulted by her connections and acquaintances as an unerring judge in all their affairs.

All things tend toward her as a center; she knows all, governs all, but never goes forth from herself.

Wilhelm at last visits her. He finds her infirm in body, but equal to all she has to do. Charity and counsel to men who need her are her business, astronomy her pleasure.

After a while, Wilhelm ascertains from the Astronomer, her companion, what he had before suspected, that she really belongs to the solar system, and only appears on earth to give men a feeling of the planetary harmony. From her youth up, says the Astronomer, till she knew me, though all recognized in her an unfolding of the highest moral and intellectual qualities, she was supposed to be sick at her times of clear vision. When her thoughts were not in the heavens, she returned and acted in obedience to them on earth; she was then said to be well.

When the Astronomer had observed her long enough, he confirmed her inward consciousness of a separate existence and

peculiar union with the heavenly bodies.

Her picture is painted with many delicate traits, and a gradual preparation leads the reader to acknowledge the truth; but, even in the slight indication here given, who does not recognize thee, divine Philosophy, sure as the planetary orbits, and inexhaustible as the fountain of light, crowning the faithful Seeker at last with the privilege to possess his own soul.

In all that is said of Macaria, we recognize that no thought is too religious for the mind of Goethe. It was indeed so.¹ "His two highest female characters, Natalia and Macaria, are representations of beneficence and heavenly wisdom".²

"Wilhelm, at the school of the Three Reverences, thinks out what can be done for man in his temporal relations. He learns to practice moderation, and even painful renunciation. The book ends, simply indicating what the course of his life will be, by making him perform an act of kindness, with good judgment and at the right moment.

Surely the simple soberness of Goethe should please at least those who style themselves, preëminently, people of common sense".³

Werther.

Margaret Fuller is correct in saying that in "Werther" we have a part of the poet's own feelings, an epoch in his development. "Werther" expresses truthfully certain phases through

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 38ff.

² Translation of Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe"
Preface, xiv.

³ Life Without and Life Within, p. 43.

which Goethe himself passed in his growth, as an individual and a genius. Margaret Fuller describes at some length the personal experience and disappointments through which the poet passed previous to writing this work.

"He was driven", she writes, "from the severity of study into the world, and then again drawn back, many times in the course of his crowded youth. Both the world and the study he used with unceasing ardor. . . He was very social, and continually perturbed by his social sympathies. He was deficient both in outward self-possession and mental self-trust", and then quoting from Goethe himself, "Either too volatile or too infatuated". Herder's and Merck's influence were also brought to bear on him and not always in a manner to cheer the young poet or give him confidence in his own productions. "His youth was as sympathetic and impetuous as any on record", she concludes.

"The effect of all this outward pressure on the poet", she continues, "is recorded in Werther,- a production that he afterwards undervalued, and to which he even felt positive aversion. It was natural that this should be so. In the calm air of the cultivated plain he attained, the remembrance of the miasma of sentimentality was odious to him. Yet sentimentality is but sentiment diseased, which to be cured must be patiently observed by the wise physician; so are the morbid desire and despair of Werther, the sickness of a soul aspiring to a purer, freer state, but mistaking the way. Werther must die because life was not wide enough and rich enough in love for him.

The best or the worst occasion in man's life is pre-

cisely that misused in Werther when he longs for more love, more freedom, and a larger development of genius than the limitations of this terrene sphere permit. Sad is it indeed if, persisting to grasp too much at once, he lose all, as Werther did. He must accept limitation, must consent to do his work in time, must let his affections be baffled by the barriers of convention. Tantalus-like, he makes this world a Tartarus, or, like Hercules, rises in fires to heaven, according as he knows how to interpret his lot. But he must only use, not adopt it. The boundaries of the man must never be confounded with the destiny of the soul. If he does not decline his destiny, as Werther did, it is his honor to have felt its unfitness for his eternal scope. He was born for wings; he is held to walk in leading-strings; nothing lower than fate must make him resigned, and only in hope should he find content--a hope not of some slight improvement in his own condition or that of other men, but a hope justified by the divine justice, which is bound in due time to satisfy every want of his nature.

Schiller's great command is, "Keep true to the dream of thy youth". The great problem is how to make the dream real, through the exercise of the waking will.

This was not exactly the problem Goethe tried to solve. To do somewhat, became too important. . . It is not the knowledge of what might be, but what is, that forms us".

Werther is characterized by a fervid eloquence of Italian glow, which betrays a part of his character almost lost sight of in the quiet transparency of his later productions, and may

give us some idea of the mental conflicts through which he passed to manhood.

The acting out the mystery into life, the calmness of survey, and the passionateness of feeling, above all the ironical baffling at the end, and want of point to a tale got up with such an eye to effect as he goes along, mark well the man that was to be. Even so did he demand in Werther; even so resolutely open the door in the first part of Faust; even so seem to play with himself and his contemporaries in the second part of Faust and Wilhelm Meister.

Yet was he deeply earnest in his play, not for men, but for himself. To himself as a part of nature it was important to grow, to lift his head to the light. In nature he had all confidence; for man, as a part of nature, infinite hope; but in him as an individual will, seemingly, not much trust at the earliest age".¹

Tasso.

So interested was Margaret Fuller in Goethe's "Tasso" that she translated it into English verse. "In Tasso", she writes, "Goethe has described the position of the practical mind in its prose relations". It is she believes another confession or expression of what Goethe as a poet felt himself.²

These pictures painted in "Tasso" are not painted from observation merely. "That deep coloring", she says, "which fills them with light and life is given by dipping the brush in one's

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 29 ff.

² Ibid. p. 28.

own life blood. Goethe had not from nature that character of self-reliance and self-control in which he so long appeared to the world. It was wholly acquired, and so highly valued because he was conscious of the opposite tendency. He was by nature as impetuous, though not as tender as Tasso, and the disadvantage at which this constantly placed him was keenly felt by a mind made to appreciate the subtlest harmonies in all relations. Therefore was it that when he at last cast anchor, he was so reluctant again to trust himself to wave and breeze".¹

Of the harrowing feelings that must rend a sympathetic and tender poetic heart like that of Tasso, Margaret Fuller says:

"Let me add as the best criticism, for the hearing of those that will hear, one of those matchless scenes in which Goethe represents the sudden blazes of eloquence, the fitful shadings of mood, and the exquisite sensitiveness to all influences, that made the weakness and the power of Tasso. - - It also presents the relation that probably existed between the princess and the poet, with more truth than their confessors could discern it, for the poet is the only priest in the secrets of the heart".²

Then follow two scenes (Act II, Scene 1 and 2) from Margaret Fuller's translation of "Tasso", in which Tasso gives vent to the deepest poetic feeling, that arise from the conflicts between his idealistic, poetic inner nature, and the unfeeling, realistic world outside; and finally, based upon the encouraging

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 28f.

² "Dial", January, 1842.

words of the Princess, he ends the second scene with a most glowing hopes and ecstasy of soul a complete abandonment to his poetic feelings.

The sufferings of Tasso always appealed deeply to Margaret Fuller, and she writes: "Beethoven! Tasso! It is well to think of you! What sufferings from baseness, from coldness! How rare and momentary were the flashes of joy, of confidence and tenderness, in these noblest lives! Yet could not their genius be repressed. The Eternal Justice lives. O, Father, teach the spirit the meaning of sorrow, and light up the generous fires of love and hope and faith".¹

Of "Egmont" and "Goetz von Berlichingen" Margaret Fuller also speaks, calling the former "the generous free liver",² and finding in the latter a striking and beautiful picture of ideal home relations between husband and wife, "that community of inward life, that perfect esteem which enables Goetz von Berlichingen to say 'Whom God loves, to him gives he such a wife'".³

Elective Affinities.

The "Elective Affinities" and "Iphigenie" were to Margaret Fuller the two "surpassingly beautiful works" of Goethe. For these she expresses the greatest praise and most glowing admiration. "In them is shown most distinctly", she says, "the clear preception which was in Goethe's better nature, of the beau-

¹ Mem. II, p. 105.

² Life Without and Life Within, p. 60.

³ Woman in the Nineteenth Century, p. 80.

ty of that steadfastness, of that singleness and simple melody of soul, which he too much sacrificed to become the many-sided One".

What a storm of bitter criticism and protest was hurled against the first of these works by those who held to Puritan traditions, rejecting everything that in any way pertained to the sensuous nature, is seen from Margaret Fuller's own criticism of these works. She was practically alone in her large circle who saw the true meaning and higher beauty of some of the characters of this charming work. How great must have been her influence in correcting the mistaken idea current concerning this work, and in saving it from the bad reputation that had been given it! In her enthusiasm she justly called it "Moral" and "Religious even to piety in its spirit".

"Not Werther", she says, "not the Nouvelle Heloise, have been assailed with such a storm of indignation as the first named of these works, on the score of gross immorality".

The reason probably is the subject; any discussion of the validity of the marriage vow making society tremble to its foundation; and, secondly, the cold manner in which it is done. All that is in the book would be bearable to most minds if the writer had less the air of a spectator, and had larded his work here and there with ejaculations of horror and surprise.

These declarations of sentiment on the part of the author seem to be required by the majority of readers, in order to an interpretation of his purpose, as sixthly, seventhly, and eighthly were, in an old fashioned sermon, to rouse the audience to a perception of the method made use of by the preacher.

But it has always seemed to me that those who need not such helps to their discriminating faculties, but read a work so thoroughly as to apprehend its whole scope and tendency, rather than hear what the author says it means, will regard the *Elective Affinities* as a work especially what is called moral in its outward effect, and religious even to piety in its spirit. The mental aberrations of the consorts from their plighted faith, though in one case never indulged, and though in the other no veil of sophistry is cast over the weakness of passion, but all that is felt expressed with the openness of one who desires to legitimate what he feels, are punished by terrible griefs and a fatal catastrophe. Ottilia, that being of exquisite purity, with intellect and character so harmonized in feminine beauty, as they never before were found in any portrait of woman painted by the hand of man, perishes, on finding she has been breathed on by unhallowed passion, and led to err even by her ignorant wishes against what is held sacred".¹ "The virgin Ottaglia. . .immolates herself to avoid the possibility of spotting her thoughts with passion".²

"It pains me to part with Ottilia. She says in a letter 'I wish we could learn books, as we do pieces of music, and repeat them, in the author's order, when taking a solitary walk. But, now, if I set out with an Ottilia, this wicked fairy association conjures up such crowds of less lovely companions, that I often cease to feel the influence of the elect one'.³

¹ *Life Without and Life Within*, p. 48 f.

² *Conversations with Goethe*, *Introd.*, p. xiv.

³ *Mem. I*, p. 117.

"I am thinking", she writes again, to a ministerial friend, "how I omitted to talk a volume to you about the "Elective Affinities". Now I shall never say half of it, for which I, on my own account, am sorry. . . .I am now going to dream of your sermon, and of Otillia's china-asters".¹

"The only personage whom we do not pity is Edward, for he is the only one who stifles the voice of conscience.

There is indeed a sadness, as of an irresistible fatality, brooding over the whole. It seems as if only a ray of angelic truth could have enabled these men to walk wisely in this twilight, as first so soft and alluring, then deepening into blind horror.

But if no such ray came to prevent their earthly errors, it seems to point heavenward in the saintly sweetness of Ottilia. Her nature, too fair for vice, too finely wrought even for error, comes lonely, intense, and pale, like the evening star on the cold, wintry night. It tells of other worlds, where the meaning of such strange passages as this must be read to those faithful and pure like her, victims perishing in the green garlands of a spotless youth to atone for the unworthiness of others.

An unspeakable pathos is felt from the minutest trait of this character, and deepens with every new study of it. Not even in Shakespeare have I so felt the organizing power of genius. Through dead words I find the least gestures of this person, stamping themselves on my memory, betraying to the heart the secret of her life, which she herself, like all these divine beings,

¹ Mem. I, p. 118.

knew not. I feel myself familiarized with all beings of her order. I see not only what she was, but what she might have been, and live with her in yet untrodden realms.

Here is the glorious privilege of a form known only in the world of genius. There is on it no stain of usage or calculation to dull our sense of its immeasurable life. What in our daily walk, mid common faces and common places, fleets across us at moments from glances of the eye, or tones of the voice, is felt from the whole being of one of these children of genius.

This precious gem is set in a ring complete in its enamel. I cannot hope to express my sense of the beauty of this book as a work of art. I would not attempt it if I had elsewhere met any testimony to the same. The perfect picture, always before the mind, of the chateau, the moss hut, the park, the garden, the lake, with its boat and the landing beneath the platan trees; the gradual manner in which both localities and persons grow upon us, more living than life, inasmuch as we are, unconsciously kept at our best temperature by the atmosphere of genius, and thereby more delicate in our perceptions than amid our customary fogs; the gentle unfolding of the central thought, as a flower in the morning sun; then the conclusion, rising like a cloud, first soft and white, but darkening as it comes, till with a sudden wind it bursts above our heads; the ease with which we everywhere find points of view all different, yet all bearing on the same circle, for, though we feel every hour new worlds, still before our eye lie the same objects, new, yet the same, unchangeable, yet always changing their aspects as we proceed, till at

last we find we ourselves have transferred the circle, and know all we overlooked at first,-- these things are worthy of our highest admiration.

For myself, I never felt so completely that very thing which genius should always make us feel -- that I was in its circle, and could not get out till its spell was done, and its last spirit permitted to depart. I was not carried away, instructed, delighted more than by other works, but I was there, living there, whether as the platan tree, or the architect, or any other observing part of the scene. The personages live too intensely to let us live in them; they draw around themselves circles within the circle; we can only see them close, not be themselves.

Others, it would seem, on closing the book, exclaim, "What an immoral book!" I well remember my own thought, 'It is a work of art!' At last I understood that world within a world, that ripest fruit of human nature, which is called art. With each perusal of the book my surprise and delight at this wonderful fulfillment of design grew".¹

Iphigenie.

"Iphigenie" Margaret Fuller calls, "a work beyond the possibility of negation; a work where a religious meaning not only pierces but enfolds the whole; a work as admirable in art, still higher in significance, more single in expression"² (than

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 49 ff.

² Ibid, p. 51.

the "Elective Affinities").

Since this drama was not then well known in America, Margaret Fuller gives an outline of it and translates some of the most beautiful passages into English, but says after the first passage: "These are the words and thoughts; but how give an idea of the sweet simplicity of expression in the original, where every word has the grace and softness of a flower petal?"¹

"Iphigenie tells the story of her race in a way that makes us feel as if that most famous tragedy had never before found a voice, so simple, so fresh in its naïveté is the recital". . . . The first two acts contain "scenes of the most delicate workmanship. . . between the light-hearted Pylades, full of worldly resource and ready tenderness, and the suffering Orestes, of far nobler, indeed heroic nature, but less fit for the day and more for the ages. . . . The characters of both are brought out with great skill, and the nature between 'the butterfly and the dark flower', distinctly show in a few words." . . .

"The scenes go on more and more full of breathing beauty. The lovely joy of Iphigenie, the meditative softness with which the religiously educated mind perpetually draws the inference from the most agitating events, impress us more and more. At last the hour of trial comes". . .

"But, O, the step before all this can be obtained;--to deceive Thoas, a savage and a tyrant indeed, but long her protector,-- in his barbarous fashion, her benefactor! How can she buy life, happiness, or even the safety of those dear ones

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 53.

at such a price?". . .

"Then follows the sublime song of the Parcae, well known through translations. But Iphigenie is not a victim of fate for she listens steadfastly to the god in her breast. Her lips are incapable of subterfuge. She obeys her own heart, tells all to the king, calls up his better nature, wins, hallows, and purifies all around her, till the heaven prepared way is cleared by the obedient child of heaven, and the great trespass of Tantalus cancelled by a woman's reliance on the voice of her innocent soul"¹. "Iphigenie by her steadfast truth, hallows all about her, and disarms the powers of hell".²

But perhaps most powerfully and most charmingly interpreted are Goethe's woman characters, represented by Margaret Fuller in her work "Woman of the Nineteenth Century", containing her masterly argument and plea for a higher, better, freer womanhood. Here they appear all together as representatives of the highest ideals of their sex, types which Margaret Fuller longed to see developed in our own country. These female characters are left in just the order in which they appear in the work mentioned above, for thus they appear in the best light, and exactly as Margaret Fuller presented them to her readers.

The very fact that she takes over from Goethe the succession of female characters and gives them just such a setting in this, one of her most important and influential books, so that they appear here as the highest ideals of womanhood, ideals which

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 53 ff.

² Preface to "Conversations with Eckermann".

she wished her American sisters to make real in our country,- all this is proof that she looked upon Goethe, not only as a great poet-artist who entertains and delights us, but as an ethical leader, whose doctrines of life and whose ideal types of character are to be carried out and lived out in every day life. She was probably the only American-born person of her time in New England, who could see the great world-poet in this light and understood his great mission to humanity.

"Goethe proceeding on his own track", she writes, "elevating the human being in the most imperfect states of society by continual efforts at self-culture, takes as good care of women as of men. His mother, the bold, gay Frau Aya, with such playful freedom of nature; the wise and gentle maiden, known in his youth, over whose sickly solitude 'the Holy Ghost brooded as a dove'; his sister the intellectual woman par excellence; the Duchess Amelia", of whom she says later; "In this country (America) is venerated, wherever seen, the character which Goethe spoke of as an Ideal, which he saw actualized in his friend and patroness, the Grand Duchess Amelia; 'The excellent woman is she, who, if the husband dies can be father to the children'. And this if read aright, tells a great deal".¹ "Lili", the writer says, "combined the character of the woman of the world with the lyrical sweetness of the shepherdess, on whose chaste and noble breast flowers and gems were equally at home."² All these had supplied abundant suggestions to his (Goethe's) mind, as to the wants and

¹ Ibid. p. 110.

² Ibid. p. 125f.

and possible excellencies of Woman. And from his poetic soul grew up forms new and more admirable than life has yet produced, for whom his clear eye marked out paths in the future.

In Faust Margaret represents the redeeming power, which at present upholds Woman, while waiting for a better day. The lovely little girl, pure in instinct, ignorant in mind, is misled and profaned by man abusing her confidence. To the Mater Dolorosa she appeals for aid. It is given to the soul, if not against outward sorrow; and the maiden, enlightened by her sufferings, refusing to receive temporal salvation by the aid of an evil power, obtain the eternal in its stead.

In the second part the intellectual man, after all his manifold strivings, owes to the interposition of her whom he had betrayed his salvation. She intercedes this time, herself a glorified spirit, with the Mater Gloriosa". . . "Leonora, too, is woman as we see her now, pure, thoughtful, refined by much acquaintance with grief".¹

Margaret Fuller praises the good suggestion of the Princess in "Tasso", that a senate of the Matrons in each city and town be appointed to examine into the character of the young men and decide which are fit for admission into their homes and the society of their daughters and she quotes the passage spoken by the Princess from her own translation in Act II.

"A synod of good women should decide; It is their province. Like a wall decorum surrounds and guards the frailer sex. Propriety, Morality are their defense and fortress, their tower

¹ Woman in the Nineteenth Century, p. 126 f.

of strength; and lawlessness their foe".¹

"Iphigenia he speaks of in his journals as his 'daughter', and she is the daughter whom a man will wish, even if he has chosen his wife from very mean motives. She is the virgin, steadfast soul to whom falsehood is more dreadful than any other death."

Again elsewhere Iphigenia is praised as "a tender virgin, ennobled and strengthened by sentiment more than intellect; what they call a woman par excellence".²

"As Wilhelm advances into the upward path, (in "Wilhelm Meister") he becomes acquainted with better forms of woman, by knowing how to seek, and how to prize them when found. For the weak and immature man will often admire a superior woman, but he will not be able to abide by a feeling which is too severe a tax on his habitual existence. But with Wilhelm the gradation is natural, and expresses ascent in the scale of being. At first he finds charm in Mariana and Philina, very common forms of feminine character, not without redeeming traits, no less than charms, but without wisdom or purity. Soon he is attended by Mignon, the finest expression ever yet given to what I have called the lyrical element in Woman. She is a child, but too full grown for this man; he loves, but cannot follow her; yet is the association not without an enduring influence. Poesy has been domesticated in his life; and though he strives to bind down her

¹ Woman in the Nineteenth Century, p. 152.

Art, Literature and the Drama, p. 338.

² Woman in the Nineteenth Century, p. 422.

heavenward impulse, as an art or apothegm, these are only the tents beneath which he may sojourn for a while, but which may be easily struck, and carried on limitless wanderings".

Margaret Fuller looked upon Mignon the child as an example, too, of the 'prophetic form expressive of the longing for a state of perfect freedom, pure love', in woman, and also considered her a representative of that type of beings, half angelic, whose affection is so pure that they are capable of a friendship where selfishness and sex play no part whatever. Then Margaret Fuller continues quoting from Mignon's songs shortly before her death:

"Jene himmlischen Gestalten
 Sir fragen nicht nach Mann und Weib,
 Und keine Kleider, keine Falten
 Umgeben den verklärten Leib".

"She could not remain here but was translated to another air. And it may be that the air of this earth will never be so tempered that such can bear it long. But while they stay they must bear testimony to the truth they are constituted to demand. That an era approaches which shall approximate nearer to such a temper than any has yet done, there are many tokens".

"Advancing into the region of thought", Margaret Fuller goes on, "he (Wilhelm Meister) encounters a wise philanthropy in Natalia (instructed, let us observe, by an uncle); practical judgment and the outward economy of life in Theresa; pure devotion in the Fair Saint.

Further, and last he comes to the house of Macaria,

the soul of a star; that is, a pure and perfected intelligence embodied in feminine form, and the center of a world whose members revolve harmoniously around her. She instructs him in the archives of a rich human history, and introduces him to the contemplation of the heavens.

From the hours passed by the side of Mariana to these with Macaria is a wide distance for human feet to traverse. Nor has Wilhelm travelled so far, seen and suffered so much in vain. He now begins to study how he may aid the next generation; he sees objects in harmonious arrangement, and from his observations deduces precepts by which to guide his course as a teacher and a master, 'helpful, comfort-full'.

In all these expressions of Woman, the aim of Goethe is satisfactory to me. He aims at a pure self-subsistence, and a free development of any powers with which they may be gifted by nature as much for them as for men. They are units, addressed as souls. Accordingly, the meeting between Man and Woman, as represented by him, is equal and noble; and, if he does not depict marriage, he makes it possible.

In the Macaria, bound with the heavenly bodies in fixed revolutions, the centre of all relations, herself unrelated, he expresses the Minerva side of feminine nature. It was not by chance that Goethe gave her this name. Macaria, the daughter of Hercules, who offered herself as a victim for the good of her country, was canonized by the Greeks, and worshipped as the Goddess of true Felicity. Goethe has embodied this Felicity as the serenity that arises from Wisdom, a wisdom such as the Jew-

ish man venerated, alike instructed in the designs of heaven, and the methods necessary to carry them into effect upon earth.

Mignon is the electrical, inspired, lyrical nature. And wherever it appears we echo in our aspirations that of the child,

'So let me seem until I be:-
Take not the White robe away'.

- - - - -

'Though I live without care and toil,
Yet felt I sharp pain enough:
Make me again forever young'.

All these women, though we see them in relations, we can think of as unrelated. They all are very individual, yet seem nowhere restrained. They satisfy for the present, yet arouse an infinite expectation.

The economist Theresa, the benevolent Natalia, the fair Saint, have chosen a path, but their thoughts are not narrowed to it. The functions of life to them are not ends, but suggestions.

Thus to them **all** things are important, because none is necessary. Their different characters have fair play, and each is beautiful in its minute indications, for nothing is enforced or conventional; but everything, however slight, grows from the essential life of the being.

Mignon and Theresa wear male attire when they like, and it is graceful for them to do so, while Macaria is confined to her arm-chair behind the green curtain, and the Fair Saint could not bear a speck of dust on her robe.

All things are in their places in this little world, because all is natural and free, just as 'there is room for everything out of doors'. Yet all is rounded in by natural harmony, which will always arise where Truth and Love are sought in the light of Freedom.

Of ~~Schiller's~~ shorter ~~poems~~ Margaret Fuller quotes "Kassandra" in the famous passage "Give me truth; cheat me by no illusions--", in which she expresses her own feelings.¹ In the same manner she expresses her renunciation through a translation of Goethe's "Entsagung".² But especially did she admire Goethe's fragment "Prometheus", which she mentions in several of her works and, in 1838, translates it for a friend. Prometheus, she thought, inspired us more than anything else with the courage of a truly liberated soul, an independence and a passionate desire to be a benefit to all humanity, even at the cost of suffering and sacrifice, just as this ancient hero, so well described by Goethe, had before us. It also expressed, she says, an idea of how man might become a creator, like God.

Of Goethe's lyrical poetry mention has already been made above. "It seems to me Goethe's mind had embraced the universe", she writes, "I felt this lately in reading his lyric poems. I am enchanted while I read. He comprehends every feeling I ever had so perfectly, expresses it so beautifully".

Much of the enthusiasm, she felt for German, and especially Goethe, and her interpretations, she undoubtedly imparted

¹ Memoirs I, p. 303.

² Ibid, 310.

to the members of her circle of distinguished friends. They must have accepted to a large extent these interpretations, for we see a great change in sentiment toward Goethe, in fact all German authors.

B.

Margaret Fuller's Translations.

Tasso

One of the results of Margaret Fuller's study of German was the translation of German works into English. These are, with the exception of a few short poems, either from Goethe's works directly, or from works that bear directly or indirectly on some phase of his life, and no doubt were inspired by her admiration for the great German poet. Her first translation in point of time is Goethe's "Tasso". This work she must have translated and given its presence metrical form as early as 1834, only two years after she began her study of German; for in a letter to Rev. F. H. Hedge she expresses her intention to print it. She failed, however, to find a publisher, and it did not appear in print until after her death in 1859, when her brother, Arthur B. Fuller, enclosed it in a volume of her works entitled "Art, Literature, and the Drama", with a number of other papers of Margaret Fuller's, published in 1846, under the title "Papers on Literature and Art".

Significant it is that this drama appealed to Margaret Fuller so strongly. It is proof of the extraordinary charm that "Tasso", this "gem", this "perfect work of art", as she calls it must have had for her.

The quality of the translation as such could be improved no doubt here and there. The original text is often not followed closely, and often the lines are lengthened or broken. The meter also here and there would bear improvement. Yet on the other hand, these faults are in some respects more than balanced by positive merits. One of the most difficult tasks in translating, poetry especially, is to find idioms in the language into which a work is translated, that correspond exactly to those of the original, and convey the same meaning and force. Margaret Fuller, like Coleridge in his translations, has remained true to the spirit of the original rather than to the letter. Her translation is expressed in good idiomatic English and has all the qualities of an original.

"The exact transmission of thought", she writes, "seems to me the one important thing in a translation; if grace and purity of style come of themselves, it is so much gained. In translating, I throw myself, as entirely as possible, into the mood of the writer, and make use of such expressions as would come naturally, if reading the work aloud into English. The style thus formed is at least a transcript of the feelings excited by the original".¹

For the reader, therefore, it has a native flavor and a charming beauty far superior to many translations from foreign authors, in which the translator stuck closer to the original and was compelled, for that reason, to sacrifice beauty of ex-

¹ Correspondence of Fräulein G"underode and Bettine von Arnim, Preface, p. VI.

pression and purity to idiom. The translation before us, when judged from this standpoint, is remarkably well done.

Margaret Fuller has written a preface to her translation that is interesting for two reasons. In it she reveals to us the fine perception and feeling for language she must have had; and also expresses the most enthusiastic praise for Goethe and the qualities of the drama which she here translated.

"The rapid growth of German literature", she writes, "the concurrence of so many master spirits, all at once fashioning the language into a medium for the communication of their thoughts, has brought it to a perfection which must gradually be impaired, as inferior minds mold and adapt it to their less noble uses. It may become better suited to certain kinds of light writing, but must lose its condensed power of expression, as the English has done. . . . I deemed the rendering of the spirit, on the whole, more desirable than that of the letter. . . . With regard to the broken and lengthened lines. . . , it is more difficult to polish the translation than an original work, since we are denied the liberty of retrenching or adding where the ear and taste cannot be satisfied". But she adds: "That no setting can utterly mar the lustre of such a gem, or make this perfect work of art unwelcome to the meditative few, or even to the tasteful many".¹

When judged from the standpoint from which "Tasso" was here translated, from the faithfulness with which the spirit is

¹ Preface to Translation of Goethe's "Tasso", -- Art Literature and the Drama, p. 355 f.

carried over, and the beauty, charm and vigor of the language in which it is expressed, Margaret Fuller's translation of Goethe's "Tasso" is remarkably well done.*

Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe".

In 1839 Margaret Fuller translated the first two volumes of Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe". This translation was published by George Ripley during the same year, as the fourth volume of a series entitled "Specimens of Foreign Literature", and formed according to Emerson's account the basis of the translation of Eckermann since published in London by Mr. Oxenford.¹

As Margaret Fuller, herself, states in the preface to this work, she compressed or curtailed the two German volumes known to her into one in English, omitting the accounts of Goethe's experiments and theory of colors. The "Farbenlehre", she says, "would arouse little interest here; besides, she writes:

"I was glad to dispense with them, because I have no clear understanding of the subject and could not have been secure of doing them justice!"²

*It is my intention in the near future to make a careful analysis of this translation, comparing it with the original, and to write a criticism of the same from this standpoint.

¹ Memoirs I, p. 243.

² Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", preface
p. xxv.

She left out Eckermann's meagre account of a journey to Italy, and here and there condensed Eckermann's remarks; only in a few rare instances Goethe's. Of the whole work she writes:

"I have done it with such care, that I feel confident the substance of the work and its essential features will be found here. . . . These two rules have been observed,--not to omit even such details as snuffing the candles and walking to the stove (Given by the good Eckermann with that truly German minuteness. . . .) when they seem needed to finish out the picture, either of German manners or Goethe's relations to his friends or household. The preface also contains an unusually good criticism of Goethe (if we except one or two statements) which shall be quoted at length in the following pages. Besides this there is also a very just characterization of Eckermann and his relations to Goethe.

The book more than gratified the highest hopes that the translator had dared to express for it in her preface, in which, as Mr. Higginson has said, "she underrates instead of overstating the value of her own work". "She made a delightful book of it", Mr. Higginson continues, "and one which. . . helped to make the poet a familiar personality to English speaking readers. For one, I can say that it brought him nearer to me than any other book, before or since, has ever done".¹

She probably got no compensation for it, according to Mr. Higginson, "beyond the good practice for herself and the gratitude of others".² She undoubtedly had still another aim

¹ Higginson, p. 189. ² Ibid, 190.

in publishing this work, perhaps the chief aim, namely, to make her Goethe better known among her countrymen, as the preface clearly indicates throughout; and it doubtless was a great satisfaction to see him growing in favor as a result of this effort on her part.

In the language and expression of this translation Margaret Fuller follows much more closely the text of the original than she did in "Tasso", as might naturally be expected in the translation of a prose work, where one is not troubled so much with the form. Though part of the translation was dictated while she was ill and did not satisfy her as well as that which she wrote personally, nevertheless, none of it is slavishly done. It is executed in much the same spirit as the former work, and has all the force and beauty of original composition.

"I have a confidence", she says, "that the translation is, in the truest sense, faithful, and trust that those who find the form living and symmetrical, will not be inclined severely to censure some change in the cut or make of the garment in which it is arrayed".¹

Life of Goethe.

It is very much to be regretted that Margaret Fuller never finished her "Life of Goethe", for which she had gathered so much material from original sources, and according to Emerson, left heaps of manuscript. Doubtless with her insight into the great poet's life and character and her unusual ability to com-

¹ Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", preface
XXVI.

prehend him in all he said, she would have been able to produce a work that would have done credit to this country. All that we know of her proposed work is from references in her letters.

The first reference to this undertaking on her part is in an undated letter in which she speaks of "that in disposition or even dread of the study (of metaphysics) which. . . has kept me from meddling with it, till lately in meditating on the life of Goethe, I thought I must get some idea of the history of philosophical opinion in Germany, that I might be able to judge of the influences it exercises upon his mind. I think I can comprehend him every other way and probably interpret him satisfactorily to others,-- if I can get the proper materials".¹

Again she writes to Emerson in 1836, "I am thinking now,-- really thinking, I believe. Certainly it seems as if I had never done so before. . . never was my mind so active". But she continues; "Am I, can I make myself, fit to write an account of half a century of the existence of one of the master spirits of this world?"

"I am shocked you think I am writing the life of Goethe. No, indeed, I shall need a great deal of preparation before I shall have it clear in my head. I have taken a great many notes; but I shall not begin to write it till it all lies mapped out before me. I have no material for ten years of his life".²

Emerson thinking perhaps Carlyle might be able to help Margaret Fuller to secure the needed books on Goethe's life,

¹ Memoirs I, p. 127.

² Ibid, 128 f.

writes to him in September of the same year: "A friend of mine would gladly know what records there are of his first ten years after his settlement at Weimar".

Carlyle answers: "As to Goethe and your friend: I know not anything out of Goethe's own works (which have many notices in them) that treat specially of those ten years". And then Carlyle names a list of references that might lead to the proper sources.¹

The next year (1837) she writes: "As you imagine the Life of Goethe is not yet written; but I have studied and thought about it much. It grows in my mind with everything that does grow there. My friends in Europe have sent me the needed books on the subject, and I am now beginning to work in good earnest. . I may find myself incompetent; but I go on in hope, secure at all events, that it will be the means of the highest culture".²

A little later in the same year she writes: "Mr. Ripley, --who is about publishing a series of works on Foreign Literature,--has invited me to prepare the "Life of Goethe", on very advantageous terms".³

In the first volume of the series spoken of above, is announced "A Life of Goethe" in preparation of this work from original documents".⁴

Her family, however, needed aid, and Margaret Fuller

¹ Emerson-Carlyle Correspondence, p. 100, 109.

² Memoirs I, p. 115.

³ Ibid, 177.

⁴ Higginson, p. 189.

"reluctantly gave up" this "congenial literary project", and accepted an offer to teach in the schools of Providence.

Emerson writes of this biography of Goethe by Margaret Fuller after saying: "Nowhere did Goethe find a braver, more intelligent, or more sympathetic reader. . . . She spent much time on it and has left heaps of manuscripts which are notes transcripts, and studies in that direction. But she wanted leisure and health to finish it".¹

Correspondence of Fräulein G nderode and Bettine von Arnim.

Bettine von Arnim's connection with Goethe was without doubt what first attracted Margaret Fuller's attention and interest to her. In common with many of her Boston circle Margaret Fuller was much charmed with the letters that passed between the wise and elderly poet and the charming, fairy-like girl, bubbling over with fun and youthful exuberance. She wrote in tribute to a collection of these letters in a book under the title "Goethe's Correspondence with a Child": "The "Correspondence" is as popular here as in Germany".² Through the interest awakened by this book Margaret Fuller became interested in the correspondence between Bettina and G nderode, a canoness in one of the Catholic orders, who mixed freely with the outside world, and was an intimate friend of Bettine. This correspondence Margaret Fuller translated in part and published in 1842. The remainder was

¹ Memoirs I, p. 243.

² Dial, Vol. II, No. I.

translated by Mrs. Minna Wesselhoeft after the death of Bettine von Arnim, and published in one volume with Margaret Fuller's part, in 1860.

In describing the difference of character between the two Margaret Fuller writes: "I have been accustomed to distinguish the two as Nature and Ideal. Bettine, hovering from object to object, drawing new tides of vital energy from all, living freshly alike in man and tree, loving the breath of the damp earth as well as that of the flower which springs from it, bounding over the fences of society as easily as over the fences of the field, intoxicated with the apprehension of each new mystery, never hushed into silence by the highest, flying and singing like a bird, sobbing with the hopelessness of an infant, prophetic, yet astonished at the fulfillment of each prophesy, restless, fearless, clinging to love, yet unwearied in experiment,--is not this the pervasive vital force, cause of the effect which we call nature?

And G nderode, in the soft dignity of each look and gesture, whose lightest word has the silvery spiritual clearness of an angels lyre, harmonizing all objects into their true relations, drawing from every form of life its eternal meaning, checking, reproving, and clarifying all that was unworthy by her sadness at the possibility of its existence! Does she not meet the wild fearless bursts of the friendly genius, to measure, to purify, to interpret, and thereby to elate? As each word of Bettine's calls to enjoy and behold, like a breath of mountain air, so each of G nderode's comes like a mountain beam to transfigure the

landscape, to hush the wild beatings of the heart, and dissolve all the sultry vapors of day into pure dewdrops of the solemn and sacred night".¹

Speaking of the interests which these translations must awake Margaret Fuller says: "A single page of Bettine's gives some notion of her fresh, fragrant, and vigorous genius. But a character like G nderode's, of such subtle harmonies, and soft aerial grace, can only be descried through multiplied traits. She is a soul so delicately appareled, a woman so tenderly transfigured that the organs made use of to observe common mortals, seem to need refining in her own atmosphere, before they can clearly appreciate her. . . .

To those who have eyes to see and hearts to understand the deep leadings of the two characters, these pages present a treasury of sweetest satisfactions, of lively suggestions;-- to the obtuse, the vulgar, and the frivolous, they will seem sheer folly".²

Later, however, Margaret Fuller lost much of her admiration for Bettine's character, as is shown by the following extract from one of her letters: "G nderode is the ideal; Bettine nature; G nderode throws herself into the river because the world is all too narrow. Bettine lives, and follows out every freakish fancy, till the enchanting child degenerates into an eccentric and undignified old woman".³

¹ Correspondence of Fr ulein G nderode and Bettine von Arnim, introd. p. ix.

² Ibid, vi f.

³ Higginson, p. 192; Mem. I, p. 248; ibid. II, pp. 51, 140.

Only a slight perusal of this translation by Margaret Fuller is necessary to see how successful the translator has been in keeping the peculiar charm and grace of the one correspondent, and the vivacity and freshness of the other intact. The easy conversational German style is translated into flowing colloquial English (or more properly American) idiom, with none of its original native vigor or freshness lost.

Poems.

Margaret Fuller translated a number of short poems from Goethe, and a few from other authors, whom she liked, Schiller and Körner, especially. The poems which she translated from Goethe express for the most part, his philosophical and religious views. The poems, which here appear in print for the first time, were found by me among a mass of Margaret Fuller's manuscript letters and papers in the Boston Public Library, left there by Mr. T. W. Higginson. These poems with her complete "Credo", published in a following chapter, shed more light upon her religious convictions and at the same time reveal a clearer and closer relation between her and Goethe in this respect, than has ever before been evident from any of her published works.

Eins und Alles.

Goethe.

Within the Infinite its place to find,
How longeth forth the Individual Mind!
Chagrin and grief can there disturb no more;-

Forgetting all hot wishes, or wild Will.
 Where sounds of daily duties may be still,
 And thought, in freedom, float creation o'er.

Soul of the World! Come to pervade our soul!
 For with the idea which all else controls,

To live, to do is ours;

Ye, sympathising spirits! lead us on
 To Him, the Master by whom all is done,

Who did, who doth create all other powers.

To aid in the great work, to recreate,
 Lest matter, by resistance grown elate,

A stiff reaction take,
 An ever-living impulse Man must be,
 From shapes and colors of earth, sky, and sea,
 A second world must make.

Let all be breathing, acting, moving, living,
 Forming, transforming, taking, giving,

Only apparent be one moment's pause,
 The Eternal wills perpetual change in all,-
 What would stand fast, must soon to nothing fall,
 Such are our being's laws.

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Dauer im Wechsel.

Imitated from Goethe.

We were so deeply blest!

Oh stay, thou fain May-hour!

But the full blossom shower
Is scattered by the balmy West;-

Now I the tree enjoy,

Its freshness and its shade,-

Soon storms will be arrayed
Its beauty to destroy.

Hast thou fruit on thy tree?

Quick take it from the bough,-

That which has ripened now

Thine still may be;

A torrent's force today

Thy garden will assail

Thou through this gentle vale

No more wilt take thy way.

But did all else stand fast,

Could'st thou remain the same,-

The rocks, the tower of fame

Are not as in times past

To thee, the lips are pale

Which once met thine in love,-

And from the cliffs above

She looks not on the vale.

That hand, so quick and mild

Each gentle deed to do,

That step so light and wild,-

All this is vanished now!
 While that which takes her place,
 And is named by thy name,
 Like waves which leave no trace,
 Is hasting to the main.

 Let the beginning with the end,
 Harmonious linked in one,
 In thoughts wide current blend,
 Ere yet the whole be flown;
 The objects pass,- but the behest
 Of the immortal muse
 Can charm this Idea to thy breast,
 Which shall new forms produce.

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Goethe's poem "Eins und Alles, of which the first one of the two poems above is a translation, is one of the best commentaries of his religion that we have. How strongly it must have appealed to Margaret Fuller is seen from the fervent tone of her translation; and how nearly the religious ideas contained in it coincided with her own religious belief is evident by comparing them with those in her "Credo." Yet that Margaret Fuller did not catch the full meaning of this poem, nor of "Dauer im Wechsel" is also evident.

According to Margaret Fuller's version of the first stanza of "Eins und Alles", uniting with the Infinite means a forgetting, an obliteration of one's individuality, a state al-

most similar to that of the Buddhists Nirvana, while the real meaning of Goethe is that the ego that usually seeks its own self in pleasure, here, on the contrary, is to renounce and completely surrender itself to the All and thereby finds the fulfillment of its highest desires coupled with supreme pleasure.

Nor does her rendering of the second stanza convey Goethe's full meaning. While Margaret Fuller wants the soul of the World to pervade our souls so that we should live and do with the world soul, or in other words, become its instruments, Goethe's idea is that we should become creative competitors of the World Soul. In this our highest mission we are aided according to Goethe by invisible spirits, supreme masters, who guide and lead us to him who created everything.

The second poem "Dauer im Wechsel", which is claimed to be only "an imitation from Goethe", is in a way a translation of a poem by Goethe of the same name. It interested Margaret Fuller probably for the same reason that the first one did. Most of the stanzas of this poem she has translated fairly well, but she missed the fundamental thought, which appears in the last four lines.

One of the problems that vexed Goethe from his youth was the continual change taking place in the phenomena of the exterior world, as well as of his inner life. Hence his passionate attempts to analyze these changing phenomena in order to discover, if possible, the lasting element behind them. Thus in the remarkable poem, "Die Freuden", written during his Leipzig period, he analyzes the ever-changing colors of the dragon-fly

to get at the secret of its beauty, but, disappointed, ends with the painful outcry:

"So geht es dir Zergliedever deiner Freuden".

A similar outcry of grief and disappointment over the fleeting nature of love we find in the poem "Das Glück", of the same period:

"Was hilft es mir, dass ich geniesse?

Wie Träume fliehn die wärmsten Küsse,

Und alle Freude wie ein kuss."

In the poem "Dauer im Wechsel" we find the same analyzing of the phenomena of the exterior and inner world, but it is an analyzing which finally reaches the result for which Goethe had always searched and which he expressed in the lines:

"Danke dass die Gunst der Musen

Unvergängliches verheisst:

Den Gehalt in deinem Busen

Und die Form in deinem Geist".

The meaning clearly is, that it is the inner world that is imperishable, the world which the poet creates for himself and for us from the elements of bare reality. These four lines of verse Margaret Fuller translates:

"The objects pass,-but the behest, etc", clearly drawing the conclusion, that in spite of all this change, the promises or behest of the immortal Muse comforted or "charmed" us in the thought that new forms are produced to take the place of the old ones, which are gradually changing and passing away,-an altogether different thought.

Margaret Fuller shows her limitations, here and there in comprehending Goethe's full meaning, yet on the other hand, we are often astounded, as in the case of her interpretation of Goethe's "Prometheus", and elsewhere, how she grasps Goethe's deepest thoughts.

"Prometheus", which Margaret Fuller translated and sent to a friend, also expresses the relation between man and the Infinite. The same may be said of the poem "The God-like", partly translated by Margaret Fuller, in her first article on Goethe in the "Dial", and republished in "Life Without and Life Within".

The other poems translated from Goethe, "The Consolers", "Eagles and Doves", and "Epilogue to the Tragedy of Essex", all express a genuine depth of feeling, usually of grief. In the first two the heart is consoled by some happy thought or reflection in the end; but not in the latter, in which the queen (Elizabeth) desires to be left alone to give vent to her tears for Lord Essex, whom she loves, but whom she **has** condemned to die for treason.

The technique of the first two poems named above is not uniform. By comparing the first poem "Eins und Alles", with the original we see that the translation is not very skilfully done. The lines are generally lengthened by a foot of two syllables. The poetic picture is changed in some places, and here and there, some of the expressions seem forced. The meter too could be improved here and there. The second poem "Dauer im Wechsel" reads somewhat smoother; yet it falls far short of the beauty of expression in the original. It is doubtful, however, whether

Margaret Fuller ever intended these poems for publication at all. If she had, she doubtless would have polished them up considerably. What she probably did was to make a rapid translation of these and other poems that appealed to her most and send them, as she did Prometheus, to some friend who may not have had such a ready command of German as she. In every case, however, she remained true to the general thought and spirit of the original.

That which is, however, of most importance to us in these poems is not as to how skillfully and artistically they have been translated, but why they appealed to her, in fact had become a **part** of her; how she understood them and wished to interpret them to her friends, and thus impart to them the underlying principles and ideas of the poet who originally wrote them. Only when judged from this standpoint, when considered as vehicles of thought, do they become important.

The poems which have been published are translated with more care and skill. Especially is this true of the last named, the "Epilogue to the Tragedy of Essex", which is indeed well translated, artistic and powerful.

The poems, "The Consolers", and "Eagles and Doves", are very well translated, and are very interesting when considered from the relation they bear to Margaret Fuller's inner life.

Of course, Goethe's works are mentioned again and again throughout her works. She uses illustrations, passages, and ideas from them continually, but so far as the interpretation of Goethe's characters and philosophical doctrines are concerned, they remain substantially the same throughout. If anything, they seem to deepen in her mind, and grow more and more clear

as time goes on. It is true Margaret Fuller was somewhat indebted to Carlyle, whom she read with much interest and pleasure; yet her criticisms and interpretations are expressed with so much originality and feeling that we are compelled to look upon them as coming from her directly. Carlyle, however, doubtless suggested some of the thoughts on German authors and their works to her in a few cases, even before she studied German. Yet we cannot but feel that the deep feeling for Goethe and his works, and therefore, the thoughts resulting from them were inspired directly by the great poet, as has been shown in the preceding pages on her study of German.

In judging her criticism and her interpretations of Goethe we see that they compare very favorably with the best criticisms of today--three-quarters of a century later. But only then can we do Margaret Fuller justice when we consider her time and place, and compare her criticisms of these German masterpieces with those of the best literary critics then in America, and see her vast superiority over them, only then can we appreciate what her influence and criticisms meant in the way of a proper understanding and appreciation of Goethe, in America.

Chapter IV.

Defense and Interpretation of Goethe.

But Margaret Fuller was even more than an appreciative interpreter of Goethe. She was an active and strong defender (the strongest and most effective in America) of him and his works. Of course, here, even more than in her interpretations of Goethe's works, we must, to do her full justice, judge what she says of Goethe in the light of her own time and surroundings. Only then can we comprehend the great work which she did for his proper understanding and appreciation in America. She had to defend him, not only against the adverse criticism resulting from ignorance of the principles Goethe really proclaimed and taught, and from a lack of appreciation of his writings as works of art; but also to combat a narrow and very bitter religious prejudice against him. Even more, she had to defend him against the influence that came over from Germany, itself, through such men as Menzel. What made it all the harder for Margaret Fuller, and therefore entitles her to all the more credit, was that a residue of the same Calvinistic ideals and prejudices of New England were born and bred in her and continually struggled to express themselves.

What great odds Margaret Fuller was forced to encounter in upholding Goethe and his principles, and how severe the prejudices and attacks against him must have been may be seen when it is remembered that even the brighter minds of New England, such as Emerson and Longfellow, fired whole broadsides of adverse criticism against the great German poet.

Emerson writes to Carlyle, November, 1834: "Far, far

better seems to me the unpopularity of this Philosophical Poem (shall I call it?) (Sartor Resartus) than the adulation that followed your eminent friend, Goethe. With him I am becoming better acquainted, but mine must be a qualified admiration. It is a singular piece of good nature in you to apotheosize him. . .-that velvet life he led. . . The Puritan in me accepts no apology for bad morals in such as he. . . A certain wonderful friend of mine said that 'a false priest is the falsest of false things'. But what makes a priest? A cossack? . . .

Then to write luxuriously is not the same as to live so, but a new and worse offense. It implies an intellectual defect also, the not perceiving that the corrupt condition of human nature (which condition this harlot muse helps to perpetuate) is a temporary or artificial state."

Carlyle answers, February 3, 1835: "Your objections to Goethe are very natural". Carlyle then advises Emerson to study this "only healthy mind. . . that I have discovered in Europe for many generations. . . that first proclaimed to me (convincingly, for I saw it done): Behold even in this scandalous sceptica-Epicurean generation, when all is gone but hunger and cant, it is still possible for Man to be a man".

"I suspect", Carlyle concludes, "you yet know only Goethe, the Heathen (Ethnic); but you will know Goethe, the Christian and like that one far better." (Carlyle-Emerson Correspondence, Vol. 2)

At this earnest request of Carlyle Emerson studied

Goethe and gained a much better opinion of him; yet writes in his journal of 1836 that he has been reading "our wise, but sensual, loved and hated Goethe".¹

In his article on Modern Literature in the Dial, Emerson again speaks of "that absence of moral sentiment in Goethe, and that singular equivalence to him of good and evil in action". Of Wilhelm Meister he says: "We are never lifted above ourselves, we are not transported out of the dominion of the senses, or cheered with an infinite tenderness, or armed with a grand trust.

Goethe then must be set down as. . . the poet of limitation, . . . of this world, and not of religion and hope, . . . in short, of prose, not of poetry."²

In his volume on "Representative Men" published 1850, Emerson praises Goethe for his profound knowledge of human nature and for collecting and embracing within himself and his works the spirit of the age in all its tendencies and complexity, saying: "He was the soul of the century". "He said the best things about nature that ever were said". Yet in the end he finds the same faults with the poet as before, saying: "He is incapable of self-surrender to the moral sentiment. . . Goethe can never be dear to men. His is not even the devotion to pure truth; but to truth for the sake of culture".

Emerson does not like Goethe's hero, Wilhelm Meister; because "he has so many weaknesses and impurities and keeps such bad company that the sober English public when the book, "Wil-

¹ Emerson's Works, Vol.

² Ibid. Vol. XII, p. 330 ff.

helm Meister", was translated were disgusted."

"Always in praise of Goethe", writes Edward W. Emerson, the editor of Emerson's works, "there was a reserve (in Emerson), a protest spoken or unspoken".

Longfellow, too, in his "Hyperion", gives us his view of Goethe, which is really the gist of his lectures on him in Harvard College during the summer of 1838.

Though, like Emerson, he admired Goethe for a great many admirable qualities, he says: "His philosophy is the old Ethnic philosophy. . . What I most object to in the old gentleman is his sensuality". He mentions then, as immoral, the "Roman Elegies", and. . . "that monstrous book, the Elective Affinities", and further says, "The artist shows his character in the choice of his subject. Goethe never sculptured or painted a Madonna. He gives us only sinful Magdalens and rampant Fauns".¹

Even greater was the enmity of the public against Goethe, so great in fact that even Emerson takes the part of Goethe against them.

"----pleased the people in Boston", writes Emerson (1844) "by railing against Goethe in his Phi Beta Kappa oration, because Goethe was not an New England Calvinistic".

These are a few expressions of the sentiments in the midst of which Margaret Fuller lived and the conditions under which she worked to introduce Goethe and his doctrines into New England.

Margaret Fuller left us two records of the arguments

¹ Hyperion, p. 142, New York.

she used in her masterful defense of Goethe, against those who were assailing him and heaping abuse upon him. In the preface to her translation of Eckermann's "Conversation with Goethe", she answered all the charges brought against the poet by her countrymen and the English critics; and in her articles in the "Dial" she interprets him and defends him against Wolfgang Menzel, whose criticism of Goethe, Professor Felton of Harvard College had translated, probably to express in this way his own prejudice against the German Poet. Of these articles F. H. Hedge writes: "her critique on Goethe in the second volume of the "Dial" is, in my estimation, one of the best things she has written, and as far as it goes, it is one of the best criticisms extant of Goethe".¹

In the preface to her translation of Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe" she says: "It may not be amiss to give some intimation (more my present limits do not permit) of the grounds on which Goethe is, to myself, an object of peculiar interest and constant study.

I hear him much assailed by those among us who know him, some few in his own language, but most from translations of "Wilhelm Meister" and "Faust". These, his two great works, in which he proposed to himself the enigma of life, and solved it after his own fashion, were, naturally enough, selected, in preference to others, for translating. This was, for all but the translators, unfortunate, because these two, above all others,

¹ Mem. I, p. 96.

require a knowledge of the circumstances and character from which they rose, to ascertain their scope and tendency."¹

"The great movement in German literature", Margaret Fuller says, "is too recent to be duly estimated, even by those most interested to examine," because she thought, that there was still "the feeling of fresh creative life at work there". Any conclusive criticism upon this important literary period and upon its greatest literary genius, Goethe, was therefore somewhat premature then, Goethe having passed away only a few years before. With these critics "who declare from an occasional peep through a spy-glass", what they see and think of the great poet, she has no patience:

"Would these hasty critics but recollect how long it was before similar movements in Italy, Spain, France, and England, found their proper place in the thoughts of other nations, they would not think fifty years' investigation too much for fifty years' growth, and would no longer provoke the ire of those who are lighting their tapers at the German torch. . . .

"The objections usually made," she continues, ". . . are such as would answer themselves on a more thorough acquaintance with the subject. . . . In a recent number of "Blackwood's Magazine", has appeared an article as ignorant (and that is a strong word) as any thing that has ever been written about Goethe.

"The objections, so far as I know them, may be resolved into these classes -

¹ Preface to Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", xi.

He is not a Christian;
 He is not an Idealist;
 He is not a Democrat;
 He is not Schiller."¹

If we add to this list "He is not an orthodox Calvinist" we have all the arguments brought against him in America.

Of Goethe's Christianity she says: "A creative activity was his law. He was far from insensible to spiritual beauty in the human character. He has imbodyed it in its finest forms; but he merely put it in, what seemed to him, its place, as the key-stone of the social arch, and paints neither that nor any other state with partiality. Such was his creed as a writer. 'I paint', he seems to say, 'what I have seen; choose from it, or take it all, as you will or can'. . . . His God was rather the creative and upholding than the paternal spirit; his religion, that all his powers must be unfolded; his faith, 'that nature could not dispense with Immortality'. In the most trying occasions of his life, he referred to 'the great Idea of Duty which alone can hold us upright'. Those who cannot draw their moral for themselves (from his works) had best leave his books alone; they require the power as life does. This advantage only does he give, or intend to give you, of looking at life brought into a compass convenient to your eye, by a great observer and artist, and at times when you can look uninterrupted by action, undisturbed by passion.

¹Preface to Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", xii ff.

"He was not an Idealist; that is to say, he thought not so much of what might be as what it^s. He did not seek to alter or exalt Nature, but merely to select from her rich stores". This answers one of Emerson's chief reproaches against Goethe; that is, that he was too much a poet of the Actual and stuck too close to Mother Earth. For Goethe paints life as he found it, selecting from its rich stores that which would serve best his purpose. The passage quoted also answers Margaret Fuller's own criticism further on in the preface (p. xxi) that Goethe "had the artist's eye, and the artist's hand, but not the artist's love of structure". Goethe was more than an artist. He was a combination of poet and philosopher such as the world had not seen before, his real object, as she, as also Emerson, justly say was truth, not art alone. She says, however: "I am well satisfied that 'he went the way that God and Nature called him'".

"He was an Aristocrat". This she admits, but adds: "Yet a minority is needed to keep these liberals in check, and make them pause upon their measures long enough to know what they are doing; for, as yet, the caldron of liberty has shown a constant disposition to overboil. The artist and literary man is naturally thrown into this body, by his need of repose, and a firm ground to work in his proper way. Certainly Goethe by nature belonged on that side; and no one, who can understand the structure of his mind, instead of judging him by his outward relations, will impute to him unworthy motives. . . . To be sincere,

consistent, and intelligent in what one believes is what is important; a higher power takes care of the rest.

"In reply to those who object to him that he is not Schiller, it may be remarked that Shakspeare was not Milton, nor Ariosto Tasso. It was, indeed, unnecessary that there should be two Schillers, one being sufficient to represent a certain class of thoughts and opinions. It would be well if the admirers of Schiller would learn from him to admire and profit by his friend and coadjutor, as he himself did.

"Schiller was wise enough to judge each nature by its own law, great enough to understand greatness of an order different from his own. He was too well aware of the value of the more beautiful existences to quarrel with the rose for not being a lily, the eagle for not being a swan.

"I am not fanatical as to the benefits to be derived from the study of German literature"; and further on she says, "I am not a blind admirer of Goethe". I suppose, indeed, that there lie the life (in the German Literature) and learning of the century, and that he who does not go to those sources can have no just notion of the workings of the spirit in the European world these last fifty years or more."

After criticising German literature, saying it did not please her in every respect, and stating her objections, she continues: "No one who has a higher aim in reading German books than mere amusement; no one who knows what it is to become acquainted with a literature as literature, in its history of mu-

tual influences, diverse yet harmonious tendencies, can leave aside either Schiller or Goethe; but far, far least the latter. It would be leaving Augustus Caesar out of the history of Rome because he was not Brutus.

"Having now confessed to what Goethe is not", she further writes, "I would indicate, as briefly as possible, what, to me, he is.

"Most valuable as a means of balancing the judgment and suggesting thought from his antagonism to the spirit of the age.

"As one of the finest lyric poets of modern times. Bards are also prophets; and woe to those who refuse to hear the singer, to tender him the golden cup of homage. Their punishment is in their fault.

"As the best writer of the German language, who has availed himself of all its advantages of richness and flexibility, and added to them a degree of lightness, grace, clearness, and precision, beyond any other writer of his time.

"As a critic, on art and literature, not to be surpassed in independence, fairness, powers of sympathy, and largeness of view.

"Could I omit to study this eighty years' journal of my parent's life, traced from so commanding a position, by so sure a hand, and one informed by so keen and cultivated an eye? Where else shall we find so large a mirror, or one with so finely decorated a frame?" This could hardly be stronger. She here calls him her "parent".

"As a mind which has known how to reconcile individuality of character with universality of thought; a mind which, whatever be its faults, ruled and relied on itself alone (Selbst-Leben); a nature which knew its law, and revolved on its proper axis, unrepenting, never bustling, always active, never stagnant, always calm."¹

That some of the objections which Margaret Fuller expresses in this same article against Goethe, along with her praise of him, were not deeply felt and "had method" in them, is indicated by the following sentence with which she concludes her objections: "I flatter myself I have now found fault enough to prove me a worthy critic, after the usual fashion.

In her masterly defense of Goethe in the "Dial", entitled "Menzel's View of Goethe", she says:

"Menzel's view of Goethe is that of a Philistine, in the least opprobrious sense of the term. It is one which has long been applied in Germany to petty cavillers and incompetent critics. I do not wish to convey a sense so disrespectful in speaking of Menzel. He has a vigorous and brilliant mind, and a wide, though imperfect, culture. He is a man of talent, but talent cannot comprehend genius. He judges of Goethe as a Philistine, inasmuch as he does not enter into Canaan, and read the prophet by the light of his own law, but looks at him from without, and tries him by a rule beneath which he never lived. That there was something Menzel saw; what that something was not he saw, but

¹Preface to Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", xii. ff.

what it was he could not see; none could see; it was something to be felt and known at the time of its apparition, but the clear sight of it was reserved to a day far enough removed from its sphere to get a commanding point of view. Has that day come? A little while ago it seemed so; certain features of Goethe's personality, certain results of his tendency, had become so manifest. But as the plants he planted mature, they shed a new seed for a yet more noble growth. A wider experience, a deeper insight, make rejected words come true, and bring a more refined perception of meaning already discerned. Like all his elder brothers of the elect band, the forlorn hope of humanity, he obliges us to live and grow, that we may walk by his side; vainly we strive to leave him behind in some niche of the hall or our ancestors; a few steps onward and we find him again, of yet serener eye and more towering mien than on his other pedestal. Former measurements of his size have, like the girdle bound by the nymphs round the infant Apollo, only served to make him outgrow the unworthy compass. The still rising sun, with its broader light, shows us it is not yet noon. In him is soon perceived a prophet of our own age, as well as a representative of his own; and we doubt whether the revolutions of the century be not required to interpret the quiet depths of his Saga.

Sure it is that none has yet found Goethe's place, as sure that none can claim to be his peer, who has not some time, ay, and for a long time, been his pupil!¹

¹Life Without and Life Within, p. 13 ff.

"Yet much truth has been spoken of him in detail, some by Menzel, but in so superficial a spirit, and with so narrow a view of its bearings, as to have all the effect of falsehood. Such denials of the crown can only fix it more firmly on the head of the "Old Heathen". To such the best answer may be given in the words of Bettina Brentano: 'The others criticise thy works; I only know that they lead us on and on till we live in them'. And thus will all criticism end in making more men and women read these works, and 'on and on', till they forget whether the author be a patriot or a moralist, in the deep humanity of the thought, the breathing nature of the scene. While words they have accepted with immediate approval fade from memory, these oft-denied words of keen, cold truth return with ever new force and significance.

"Men should be true, wise, beautiful, pure, and aspiring. This man was true and wise, capable of all things. . . Can we, in a world where so few men have in any degree redeemed their inheritance, neglect a nature so rich and so manifestly progressive?

"Historically considered, Goethe needs no apology. His so-called faults fitted him all the better for the part he had to play. In cool possession of his wide-ranging genius, he taught the imagination of Germany, that the highest flight should be associated with the steady sweep and undazzled eye of the eagle. Was he too much the connoisseur, did he attach too great an importance to the cultivation of taste, where just then Ger-

man literature so much needed to be refined, polished, and harmonized? Was he too sceptical, too much an experimentalist, - how else could he have formed himself to be the keenest, and, at the same time, most nearly universal of observers, teaching theologians, philosophers, and patriots that nature comprehends them all, commands them all, and that no one development of life must exclude the rest? . . . If you want a moral enthusiast, is not there Schiller? If piety, of purest, mystic sweetness, who but Novalis? Exuberant sentiment, that treasures each withered leaf in a tender breast, look to your Richter. Would you have men to find plausible meaning for the deepest enigma, or to hang up each map of literature, well painted and dotted on its proper roller, - there are the Schlegels. Men of ideas were numerous as migratory crows in autumn, and Jacobi wrote the heart into philosophy, as well as he could. Who could fill Goethe's place to Germany, and to the world, of which she is now the teacher? His much-reviled aristocratic turn was at that time a reconciling element. It is plain why he was what he was, for his country and his age."

In answer to Menzel's accusation that Goethe was not patriotic, she writes: "'His mother was surprised, that when his brother Jacob died, who had been his playmate, he shed no tear. . . . Afterwards, when his mother asked whether he had not loved his brother, he ran into his room and brought from under his bed a bundle of papers, all written over, and said he had done all this for Jacob'.

"Even so in later years, had he been asked if he had

not loved his country and his fellow-men, he would not have answered by tears and vows, but pointed to his works.

"A brief summary of what Goethe was suffices to vindicate his existence, as an agent in history and a part of nature. .

"Most men, in judging another man, ask, Did he live up to our standard? But to me it seems desirable to ask rather, Did he live up to his own?. .If we can find out how much was given him, we are told, in a pure evangelium, to judge thereby how much shall be required.

"Now, .Goethe has given us both his own standard and the way to apply it. 'To appreciate any man, learn first what object he proposed to himself; next, what degree of earnestness he showed with regard to attaining that object'.

"And this is part of his hymn for man made in the divine image, 'The Godlike'.

Hail to the Unknown, the
Higher Being
Felt within us!

Unfeeling
As nature,
Still shineth the sun
Over good and evil;
And on the sinner,
Smile as on the best,
Moon and stars.
Fate too, &c.

There can none but man
 Perform the Impossible.
 He understandeth,
 Chooseth, and Judgeth;
 He can impart to the
 Moment duration.

He alone may
 The good reward,
 The guilty punish,
 Mend and deliver;
 All the wayward, anomalous
 Bind in the useful.

And the Immortals,
 Them we reverence
 As if they were men, and
 Did, on a grand scale,
 What the best man in little
 Does, or fain would do.

Let noble man
 Be helpful and good;
 Ever creating
 The Right and the Useful;
 Type of those loftier
 Beings of whom the heart whispers".

"This standard is high enough. It is what every man should express in action, the poet in music".

Margaret Fuller has, however, a curious charge to bring up against Goethe in harmony with Puritan conceptions. "Glimpses are found in his works of the highest spirituality, but it is blue sky seen through chinks in a roof which should never have been builded. He has used life to excess. He is too rich for his nobleness, too judicious for his inspiration, too humanly wise for his divine mission. He might have been a priest; he is only a sage". Only a sage? Is not a sage, such as Goethe was, of far greater value to humanity than a mere priest?

In answer to Menzel's and the multitude's accusation that Goethe was a debauchee and an Epicurean, which was also one of the chief accusations brought against him by many New Englanders of her time, she answers: "Did Goethe value the present too much? It was not for the Epicurean aim of pleasure, but for use. He, in this, was but an instance of reaction, in an age of painful doubt and restless striving as to the future. Was his private life stained by profligacy? That far largest portion of his life, which is ours, and which is expressed in his works, is an unbroken series of efforts to develop the higher elements of our being".¹

"There have been heroes, or still more frequently

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 13 ff.

poets and artists", she says in "Woman in the Nineteenth Century", having doubtless, especially Goethe in mind, "with whom the habitual life tended to expand the soul, deepen and vary the experience, refine the perceptions, and immortalize the hopes and dreams of youth.

"They were persons who never lost their originality of character, nor spontaneity of action. Their impulses proceeded from a fulness and certainty of character that made it impossible they should doubt or repent, whatever the results of their actions might be.

"They could not repent, in matters little or great, because they felt that their actions were a sincere exposition of the wants of their souls. Their impulsiveness was not the restless fever of one who must change his place somehow or somewhere, but the waves of a tide, which might be sweeled to vehemence by the action of the winds or the influence of an attractive orb, but was none the less subject to fixed laws.

"A character which does not lose its freedom of motion and impulse by contact with the world, grows with years more richly creative, more freshly individual. It is a character governed by a principle of its own, and not by rules taken from other men's experience; and therefore it is that:

'Age cannot wither them, nor custom stale

Their infinite variety'.

"Like violins, they gain by age, and the spirit of him who discourseth through them most excellent music,

'Like wine well kept and long,
 Heady, nor harsh, nor strong,
 With each succeeding year is quaffed
 A richer, purer, mellow draught'.¹

Menzel claimed that at a time when the whole German nation was wrought up by conflicting ideas and political strife Goethe was serene and calm, apparently indifferent to the calamity about him, continuing, seemingly undisturbed, his work as it lay mapped out before him every day.

"His serenity alone, in such a time of scepticism and sorrowful seeking", she writes, "gives him a claim to all our study. See how he rides at anchor, lordly, rich in freight, every white sail ready to be unfurled at a moment's warning! And it must be a very slight survey which can confound this calm self-trust with selfish indifference of temperament. . . . He never halts, never repines, never is puzzled, like other men; that tranquillity, full of life, that ceaseless but graceful motion, 'without haste, without rest', for which we all are striving, he has attained. And is not his love of the noblest kind? Reverence the highest, have patience with the lowest. Let this day's performance of the meanest duty be thy religion. Are the stars too distant, pick up that pebble that lies at thy foot, and from it learn the all. Go out like Saul, the son of Kish, look earnestly after the meanest of thy father's goods, and a kingdom shall be brought thee. The least act of pure self-renunciation

¹ Woman in the Nineteenth Century, p. 257.

hallows, for the moment, all within its sphere. The philosopher may mislead, the devil tempt, yet innocence, though wounded and bleeding as it goes, must reach at last the holy city. The power of sustaining himself and guiding others rewards man sufficiently for the longest apprenticeship. Is not this lore the noblest? . . . He was true, for he knew that nothing can be false to him who is true, and that to genius nature has pledged her protection."¹

"The greatness of Goethe", she says, "his nation had felt for more than half a century; the world is beginning to feel it, but time may not yet have ripened his critic; especially as the grand historical standing point is the only one from which a comprehensive view could be taken of him."²

In thus concluding the preface to the Translation of Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", she gives expression to the most important truth she found, in fact, the only criterion by which we may judge the real worth of any great man to his age or to the world: the historical point of view. In arriving at this point of view Margaret Fuller, not only excelled Carlyle, but also preceded by decades the contemporary critics of Goethe in Germany, who could not extricate themselves from the baleful influence of Hegel's Philosophy. ^x And we may not claim too much by saying that she was led to take this historical attitude by her thorough study of Goethe himself. There can be no doubt that had she been permitted to finish her proposed Life of Goethe, she would have written it in the true historical spirit, which her best criticisms of him breathe.

¹ Life Without and Life Within, p. 20 ff.

² Preface to Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe" xxiif.

In reading through all Margaret Fuller wrote of Goethe and his works, we see that, though prejudice in a few instances, now and then, prevented her from doing the great poet full justice, and though she misunderstood him sometimes,- for she too had her limitations; yet on the whole, we can justly say with one of her intimate friends and German teachers, F. H. Hedge, that her criticism, "as far as it goes, is one of the best criticisms extant of Goethe".¹

¹ Memoirs I, p. 96.

Chapter V.

Religion and Philosophy of Life.

The influence of the study of Goethe upon Margaret Fuller's religious life and doctrines was great. As stated in the preceding chapter, one of her great objects in life was to grow. James Freeman Clarke in speaking of this aim in Margaret Fuller's life, after her acquaintance with German, and especially Goethe, says:

"This aim from first to last was self-culture, . . . and was distinctly apprehended and steadily pursued by her from first to last. . . . In this she spoke truth. The good and the evil which flow from this great idea of self-development she fully realized. This aim of life, originally self-chosen, was made much more clear to her mind by the study of Goethe, the great master of this school, in whose unequalled eloquence this doctrine acquires an almost irresistable beauty and charm".¹

How nearly this aim in her life coincides with the Goethean doctrine of the harmonious development of the personality may be further seen when we remember that exactly the same thing which is said of her here, was also said of Goethe himself. It is also this great idea of self-culture, the unfolding and growing from within outwards through experience and action in real life, and the faith in a divine instinct as a guide, that lies at the foundation of Goethe's great character in "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister".

"It was a high, noble one (This aim of self-culture)",

¹ Mem. I, 132 f.

writes Mr. Clarke, "wholly religious, almost Christian. It gave dignity to her whole career, and made it heroic. . . . It she even was ambitious of knowledge and talent, as a means of excelling others, and gaining fame, position, admiration, - this vanity had passed before I knew her, and was replaced by a profound desire for a full development of her whole nature, by means of a full experience of life".¹

"She was religious", says Mrs. Howe, "in her recognition of the divine element in human experience, and Christian in her elevation above the sordid interests of life, in her devotion to the highest standards of duty and of destiny".²

Margaret Fuller is usually associated with the Transcendental Movement in New England, especially by later writers, and, what is stranger, is classed as one of the leaders.* It seems perfectly evident, however, both, from her own statements, and the difference between the nature of the movement and her philosophical and religious belief that she was not a Transcendentalist at all, much less a leader in the movement. This fact

* Dr. H. C. Goddard in his work on New England Transcendentalism, (p. 8) names the leaders in this movement, among whom he places her, "because", as he writes, "common consent seems to have selected (them)".

¹ Mem. I, p. 132.

² Howe, p. 30.

seems to have been clear to her from the very start. As early as 1835, in the infancy of the movement, she writes concerning the publication of the new magazine then on foot, and which later appeared as the "Dial":-

"I shall feel myself honored if I am deemed worthy of lending a hand, albeit I fear I am merely "Germanico", and not 'transcendental'.¹

The error of placing her among the Transcendentalists seems to have been due chiefly to the mere fact that she happened to be associated more or less closely with the leaders, and in the broad, elastic, and often very vague manner in which the term "transcendental" was used. Mr. T. W. Higginson, writing, of course, from a purely literary standpoint, goes very little further in his definition of the term than, that "the Transcendental movement amounted essentially to this: that about the year 1836, a number of young people in America made the discovery, that in whatever quarter of the globe they happened to be, it was possible for them to take a look at the stars for themselves", that a few "fresh thinkers", "apostles of the ideal", appeared in good earnest and speculated in philosophy and theology, that they encouraged originality and looked immediately around them for their stimulus, scenery, etc., in the literature they produced, and had a powerful influence for good on American literature generally.² Of course, with a definition of Transcendentalism so comprehensive as that, Margaret Fuller may easily be classed a Transcendentalist; but other contemporary writers whom

¹ Higginson, p. 141.

² Ibid. 133.

nobody connects with the Transcendental movement, among them, Edgar Allen Poe, and Washington Irving, also found their stimulus and scenery immediately about them, and seemed to be tolerably free from imitation, and quite original in their thoughts. The fact is that the term "Transcendental Movement" is more restricted in its meaning than the definition quoted above. It was a particular and tolerably well defined philosophical and religious doctrine.

The term "transcendental", as applied to philosophy, originated, of course, with Kant. Mr. Emerson says in the third volume of the "Dial",

"What is popularly called transcendentalism among us, is Idealism; Idealism as it appears in 1842.¹ . . . The Idealism of the present day acquired the name of Transcendental, from the use of that term by Immanuel Kant, of Königsberg, who replied to the skeptical philosophy of Locke, which insisted that there was nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the experiences of the senses, by showing that there was a very important class of ideas, or imperative forms, which did not come by experience, but through which experience was acquired; that these were intuitions of the mind itself; and he denominated them Transcendental forms. The extraordinary profoundness and precision of that man's thinking have given vogue to his nomenclature, in Europe and America, to that extent that whatever belongs to the class of intuitive thought is popularly called at the present day Transcendental".²

¹ Dial III, 297 ² Ibid. 302.

Kant's use of the term, however, was more technical and restricted, than that usually applied to it by the Transcendentalists themselves. In the introduction to the "Critique of Pure Reason" Kant clearly states that in Transcendental philosophy "No concepts should be admitted which contain anything empirical, and that the a priori knowledge shall be perfectly pure. Therefore, although the highest principles of morality and their fundamental concepts are a priori knowledge, they do not belong to transcendental philosophy, because the concepts of pleasure and pain, desire, inclination, free-will, etc., which are all of empirical origin, must here be presupposed. Transcendental philosophy is the wisdom of pure speculative reason. Everything practical, so far as it contains motives, has reference to sentiments, and these belong to empirical sources of knowledge."¹

With the New Englander who embraced this originally purely philosophical doctrine, it did not long remain so. With him the vital question was, what relation did this philosophy bear to religion; what was its significance to the moral world, to life itself? An article in the "Dial" by John A. Saxton entitled "Prophecy - Transcendentalism - Progress", fitly illustrates how the special significance that this doctrine would bear to the idea of God, virtue, and the immortal soul was singled out.

"This name (Transcendentalism) as well as that of Critical Philosophy, was given by Kant, a German philosopher, who first decisively refuted the theory of sensation, and gave a scientific demonstration of the reality and authority of the spontane-

¹ Kant Introd. to "Critique of Pure Reason" Transl. by F. Max Müller, Vol. II, p. 12 f.

ous reason. . . . Kant, instead of attempting to prove, which he considered vain, the existence of God, virtue, and immortal soul, by inferences drawn, as the conclusion of all philosophy, from the world of sense; he found these things written, as the beginning of all philosophy, in obscured, but ineffaceable characters, within our inmost being, and themselves first affording any certainty and clear meaning to that very world of sense, by which we endeavor to demonstrate them. God is, nay alone is; for we cannot say with like emphasis that anything else is. This is the absolute, the primitively true, which the philosopher seeks".¹

Soon other elements were added, some philosophical, some purely literary; then all these elements combined were grafted on to the stock of the Unitarian church. Perhaps as good and as concise a definition of New England Transcendentalism in its full development and complexity as can be found is given by a Transcendentalist himself, W. H. Channing:

"Transcendentalism was an assertion of the inalienable integrity of man, of the immanence of Divinity in instinct. In part, it is a reaction against Puritan Orthodoxy; in part, an effect of renewed study of the ancients, of Oriental Pantheists, of Plato and the Alexandrians, of Plutarch^h's Morals, Seneca and Epictetus; in part, the natural product of the culture of the place and time. On the somewhat stunted stock of Unitarianism, - whose characteristic dogma was, trust in individual reason as correlative to supreme Wisdom, - had been grafted German Idealism, as taught by the masters of the most various schools, - Kant and

¹ Dial, II, p. 90 f.

Jacobi, Fichte and Novalis, Schelling and Hegel, Schleiermacher and De Wette, by Madame de Staël; Cousin, Coleridge, and Carlyle; and the result was a vague yet exalting conception of the godlike nature of the human spirit. . . . The rise of this enthusiasm was as mysterious as that of any form of revival; and only they who were of the faith could comprehend how bright was this morning-time of a new hope. . . . Transcendentalism as viewed by its disciples, was a pilgrimage from the idolatrous world of creeds and rituals to the temple of the living God in the soul. It was a putting to silence of tradition and formulas, that the Sacred Oracle might be heard through intuitions of the single-eyed and pure-hearted. Amidst materialists, zealots, and skeptics the Transcendentalist believed in perpetual inspiration, the miraculous power of will and a birth-right to universal good".¹

It was therefore, as Mrs. Howe said, "A new church, with the joy and pain of a new evangel in its midst".²

Transcendentalism, however, was like Puritanism and Unitarianism before it, in that it was purely intellectual, religious and moral, with of course, the great difference that it was infinitely more liberal and free from pure church dogmatism than the first, and on a much loftier plane than either, since it contained the element of idealism taken over chiefly from the German. Nevertheless, there was in Transcendentalism an element of moral rigorism and hidden asceticism, the legacy of Puritanism, which looked with disdain or at least with distrust upon the sensual

¹ Mem. II, 12 f.

² Howe, p. 90.

nature of man. It was this same element in Kant's philosophy which so strongly appealed to the Puritan Transcendentalists. Despite their declamations about art and poetry, it never occurred to them that true art and true poetry presuppose an ideal of man which presents the harmonious unity of both the sensual and the spiritual side of man. We must consider it one of the greatest achievements of Schiller that, feeling the defect in Kant's attitude and doctrine, he discovered in his great aesthetic essays a conception of beauty, and, with it, a new ideal of man far superior to that of Kant, an ideal, the embodiment of which he recognized in the genius and personality of Goethe.

The difference between the Transcendental standpoint and the 'aesthetic' view, between mere philosophic speculation and harmoniously developed healthy humanity cannot be expressed better than by the following extract from one of Schiller's letters to Goethe (July 9, 1796):

"Innerhalb der 'aesthetischen' Geistesstimmung regt sich kein Bedürfniss nach jenen Trostgründen, die aus der Spekulation geschöpft müssen; sie hat Selbstständigkeit, Unendlichkeit in sich; nur wenn sich das Sinnliche und das Moralische im Menschen feindlich entgegenstreben, muss bei der reinen Vernunft Hülfe gesucht werden. Die gesunde und schöne Natur braucht, wie Sie selbst sagen, keine Moral, kein Naturrecht, keine politische Metaphysik: Sie hätten ebensogut auch hinzusetzen können, sie braucht keine Gottheit um sich zu stützen und zu halten".

There can be no doubt that, owing to the Puritan prejudices and traditions, the views expressed in this passage al-

ways remained a closed chapter to the Transcendentalists. They never had, nor could they have a true appreciation of aesthetic beauty in the Goethe-Schiller sense. "Religion opens her arms to him on whom beauty is lost", says Schiller. Hence the fact that the Transcendental movement, important as it was in the intellectual life of America, left no production of great poetic merit. Hence also the lack of appreciation for the genius of Goethe in men like Emerson, who with a mistaken and arrogant conception of spirituality scented in Goethe the 'pagan'.

Margaret Fuller on the other hand had imbibed too deeply from the rejuvenating fountain of Goethe's poetry and thought, to be enticed into the caves of Transcendental mysticism, or upon the frosty heights of an imagined spirituality. It was on this fundamental Goethean principle that she differed from all the Transcendentalists. It was in this principle and philosophy that Margaret Fuller, and Goethe before her, believed and which she practiced and lived out in America and also in Italy. sp!

It is true that both systems aim at a high degree of perfection in human character, but the means by which they hope to arrive at the end they seek, as well as the character of their final aim, are entirely different. The one seeks to bring man to the desired state by elevating his thoughts into a higher realm, intellectually and religiously, in short into the atmosphere of God himself, through the divine nature of his own spirit. The Transcendentalist "believed in perpetual inspiration", W. H. Channing said. "He sought to hold communion face to face with the

unnamable Spirit of his spirit".¹ The other, less pretentious and liable to self-deception, sought the highest perfection of character in the development of the truly human, through experience in life, by a full and wise exercise of the natural given powers, and by trusting in the human instincts as a divine guide for life, at first hand. "There is an only guide", says Margaret Fuller, ". . .the voice of the heart. Thou canst not stray from nature, nor be so perverted, but she will make thee true again",² or as Goethe, her teacher, expresses the same doctrine:

"Ist nicht Kern der Natur

Menschen im Herzen?",

and since God, according to his faith, dwells in nature, he must also dwell in the heart of man. Transcendentalism is by nature deeply Christian in the traditional sense, the Goethean system, which Margaret Fuller represented may or may not be, purity and harmony in character being the only aim, or as Goethe puts it in his "Sprüche in Prosa (41)"; "Frömmigkeit ist kein Zweck, sondern ein Mittel, um durch die reinste Gemütsruhe zur höchsten Kultur zu gelangen". Yet in its highest sense this doctrine is also deeply religious, for as Goethe says in his "Zahmen Xenien":

"Halte dich im Stillen rein,

Und lass es um dich wettern;

Je mehr du fühlst ein Mensch zu sein

Desto ähnlicher bist du den Göttern".

The human instincts too are looked upon as divine, as they also are in the Transcendental doctrine, with this difference, however, that in the Goethean doctrine they are that which the

¹ Mem. II, p. 13

² Ibid. I, 211.

individual must ultimately turn to for the highest laws of his inner being. In the other this is not altogether the case. In the highest degree of perfection, too, the individual recognizes, as Goethe did, and as Margaret Fuller did, the Divine in human nature itself, and, of course, the Moving Force, Providence, or Deity back of this divine human nature.

Hence, as Goethe says:-

"Im Innern ist ein Universum auch;
Daher der Völker löblicher Gebrauch,
Das Jeglicher des Beste, was er kennt,
Er Gott, ja seinen Gott benennt".¹

It seems that James Freeman Clarke who was himself deeply influenced by Goethe, had the distinction between these two systems clearly in mind when he said of Margaret Fuller's aim of self-culture:-

"Wholly religious, and almost Christian, I said, was this aim, It was religious, because it recognized something divine, infinite, imperishable in the human soul,- something divine in outward nature and providence, by which the soul is led along its appointed way. It was almost Christian in its superiority to all low, worldly, vulgar thoughts and cares; in its recognition of a high standard of duty and a great destiny for man".²

The "Transcendental Club", called also, as has already been stated in the introduction, the "Symposium", and the "Hedge Club", met at stated intervals. Margaret Fuller attended these

¹ Gedichte, Hempel Ed. II, p. 368.

² Mem. I, p. 133.

meetings, as did many others who went either to learn the new thoughts brought, or had a new thought to impart, whether it was "transcendental" or not, for as Mr. Channing said of the Club:

"Thus, by mere attraction of affinity, grew together the brotherhood of the 'Like-minded', as they were pleasantly nicknamed by outsiders, and by themselves, on the ground that no two were of the same opinion. The only password of membership to this association, which had no compact, records, or officers, was a hopeful and liberal spirit; and its chance conventions were determined merely by the desire of the caller for a "talk", or by the arrival of some guest from a distance with a budget of presumptive novelties. Its symposium was a picnic, whereto each brought his gains, as he felt prompted, a bunch of wild grapes from the woods, or bread-corn from his threshing-floor. The tone of the assemblies was cordial welcome for every one's peculiarity; and scholars, farmers, mechanics, merchants, married women, and maidens, met there on a level of courteous respect".¹

Of course, Margaret Fuller was a very welcome and appreciated member here, for she doubtless brought with her many new ideas, and because of this, and the fact that she was a natural born leader and possessed such wonderful powers of conversation, Mr. Channing might well and consistently call her "a peer of the realm" in this cosmopolitan gathering and say she was "a member by grace of nature"²; where any new thought was welcome, and "the only guest not tolerated, was intolerance".³ Her talks or "Con-

¹ Mem. II, 14 f.

² Ibid, 18.

³ Ibid, 15.

versations" must have been very effective according to her biographers, and still more the "side-talks", which the general conversations led to. W. H. Channing says of them:

"Very observable was it also, how in side talks with her, they became confidential, seemed to glow and brighten into their best mood, and poured out in full measure what they but scantily hinted at in the circle at large."¹

The thoughts she offered, far from being vague and speculative, as was characteristic of Transcendentalism, seem to have been eminently practical, and always to have had, when the conversations turned on the subject of character-building, the great Goethean idea of an inner development of the soul, a drawing out of what was best in the individual. We can probably best judge Margaret Fuller's talks at these meetings, by those of her famous Boston "Conversations", a little later, of which we have the reports. From these we can get some idea of the practical side of life and character which she always kept in view. The great aim in these "Conversations" was to answer the question "What were we born to do, and how shall we do it?"² "What is Life?" was taken up at one of the meetings, and the reporter says of the many differences of view of life held by the various members, "She began with God as Spirit, Life, so full as to create and love eternally, yet capable of pause, Love and creativeness are dynamic forces, out of which we individually, as creatures go forth bearing his image, that is, having within our being the same

¹Mem. II, p. 19.

²Ibid. I, p. 325.

dynamic forces, by which we also add constantly to the total sum of existence, and shaking off ignorance and its effects, and by becoming more ourselves, i.e. more divine;(- or as Goethe puts it: "Desto ähnlicher bist du den Göttern".)- destroying sin in its principle, we attain to absolute freedom, we return to God, conscious like himself, and, as his friends, giving as well as receiving felicity forevermore. In short we become gods; and able to give the life which we now feel ourselves able only to receive"¹

"She must have been inspired by a good genius", the reporter adds in comment on this good passage, so thoroughly in harmony with the Goethean doctrine.

There is no question that Margaret Fuller in placing such vital emphasis upon life and activity was deeply influenced by Goethe in whose thinking and conduct the conception of life was one of the fundamental principles. He says in the "Sprüche in Prosa" (No. 1028):

"Das Höchste was wir von Gott und der Natur erhalten haben, ist das Leben, die rotirende Bewegung der Monas um sich selbst, welche weder Rost noch Ruhe kennt; der Trieb das Leben zu hegen und zu pflegen, ist einem Jeden unverwüstlich eingeboren, die Eigentümlichkeit desselben jedoch bleibt uns und Andern ein Geheimniss".

And again, "Sprüche in Prosa" (1029): "Die zweite Gunst der von oben wirkenden Wesen ist das Erlebte, das Gewahrwerden, das Eingreifen der lebendigbeweglichen Monas in die Umgebungen der Aussenwelt, wodurch sie sich erst selbst als innerlich Gren-

¹ Mem. I, 346 f.

zenloses, als äusserlich Begrenztes gewahr wird. Ueber dieses können wir, obgleich Anlage, Aufmerksamkeit und Glück dazugehört, in uns selbst klar werden; Andern bleibt aber auch dies immer ein Geheimniss.'

The close relation between these thoughts and those expressed by Margaret Fuller in the extract quoted above from her 'Conversations' is self evident.

The attainment of such absolute inner freedom as Margaret Fuller speaks of here, in such a pure Goethean fashion, Goethe claimed as one of his great achievements. Compare the passage already quoted above.

'Ihr könnt mir immer ungescheut
Wie Blüchern, Denkmal setzen;
Von Franzen hat er euch befreit,
Ich von Philisternetzen'. 1

Speaking of the influence of his writings to Chancellor von Müller toward the end of his life, he said: 'Wer sie < meine Schriften > und mein Wesen überhaupt verstehen gelernt, wird doch bekennen müssen, dass er eine gewisse innere Freiheit gewonnen.'

In the expression 'In short we become gods, etc' which is almost exactly what Goethe says in Faust < I. Wald und Höhle 1.3241 f. >:

'Du gabst zu dieser Wonne
Die mich den Göttern nah und näher bringt',

we may compare other expressions of Margaret Fuller. That she was aroused by Goethe to show the Titanic Promethean feelings

1

Goethe's Werke, Hempel ed. III, 267.

of Goethe's youth may be seen from the following passage from one of her letters quoted by Emerson. Sending her translation of Goethe's Prometheus to a friend she writes:

'Which of us has not felt the questionings expressed in this bold fragment? Does it not seem, were we gods or could steal their fire, we would make men not only happier, but free
- glorious!''¹

No American critic has come so near as she does here to a full understanding of the secret of Goethe's 'Storm and Stress period', and the true mission of his work. The sober Emerson as a preacher, of course, saw in such expressions of hers only the presence of 'a rather mountainous Me , which in a way offended the Ego in himself.

Of poetry Margaret Fuller says:

'It is the only path of the true soul, .. We might not always be poetic in life, but we might and should be in our thought and intention''.²

What she has in mind here is the aesthetic education advocated by Goethe, and especially by Schiller, in which poetry is one of the most powerful agencies.

Mrs. Howe remarks, however, that 'She did not permit the search for the beautiful to transcend the limits of our social and personal duties. The pursuit of aesthetic pleasure might lead us to fail in attaining the higher beauty''.³

¹
Mem.I.235.

²
ibid.I.341.

³
Howe.112.

Margaret Fuller was not a believer in 'Art merely for Art's sake' , but believed in drawing from this source inspiration for building up a beautiful and harmonious character, and a sense for the beautiful in life, and always tried to arrive at the truth lying back of this beauty. The two ideas for her¹ were inseparable.

'Is it not nobler and truer' , she wrote in 1842 to Mr. Channing ' to live than to think - 'Gedenke zu leben' , as Goethe says in one of his Maxims 1'; and again, 'But oh to feel the glow of action, without its weariness, what heaven it must be!''²

This certainly sounds practical, and when the active life she lived in deeds and thoughts is considered one certainly cannot accuse her of transcendental self-absorption, or as W.H.Channing says of the Transcendentalists 'Withdrawal to private study and contemplation, that they might be 'alone with the Alone!''³.

Still clearer to us is her whole doctrine of character building and mental philosophy when we read her own words with reference to these same 'Conversations'.

'Women are now taught at school all that men are; they run over, superficially, even more studies, without really being taught anything. When they come to the business of life, they find themselves inferior, and all their studies have not

¹ Cf. 'Margaret and her Friends', the whole discussion on Greek Mythology.

² Higginson.308.309. ³ Mem.II.13.

given them that practical good sense, and mother wisdom, and wit''.¹

'My ambition goes further. It is to pass in review the departments of thought and knowledge, and endeavor to place them in due relation to one another in our minds. To systematize thought and give a precision and clearness in which our sex are so deficient, chiefly I think, because they have so few inducements to test and classify that they receive. To ascertain what pursuits are best suited to us, in our own time and state of society, and how we may make best use of our means for building up the life of thought upon the life of action''.²

Looked at from this practical standpoint some of the seemingly far fetched statements and criticisms of Margaret Fuller with reference to the subjects under discussion, - as for example those in the little book ''Margaret and Her Friends'' which is probably the report of her poorest series of Conversations at Boston, - may not be quite so meaningless. Even through^h these last mentioned very meagre reports we can see shining the great purpose she had in view. In short in these ''Conversations'' Margaret Fuller tried to put into practice and effect her educational and religious ideals and to develop the inner life of each and every one in her ''classes'', after the same fashion in which she had herself been so powerfully developed by Goethe.

¹
Mem.I.329.

²
ibid.I.325.

When we consider to what a high position some of these women attained, women who were among the leaders in the thought and philanthropy of New England for over half a century we know what these "'Conversations'" , where what was noble and best in them was called out, meant to them. Margaret Fuller had always before her a definite fixed purpose, and took steps to put it into effect as soon as she saw her way clear. She had little of that vagueness and "'dwelling among the clouds'" , that impracticability mentioned by Mr.Channing as characteristic of the Transcendentalists. It was in this respect that Margaret Fuller differed in character and in temperament from them.

"'Her romantic freshness of heart'" , says Mr.Channing, "'her craving for the truth; ... her discipline in German schools had given definite form and tendency to her idealism... On the other hand strong common sense saved her from becoming¹ visionary'".

The Transcendentalists on the other hand, says Mr.Channing, "'felt that systematic results were not yet to be looked for, and that in sallies of conjecture, glimpses and flights of² ecstasy, the 'newness' lifted her veil to her votaries'".

Mrs.Howe calls Transcendentalism "'beautiful and inconvenient'" , and says , "'Method, it could not boast. Free discussion, abstinence from participation in ordinary social

¹
Mem.II.18.

²
ibid. II.14.

life and religious worship, a restless seeking for sympathy, and a constant formulation of sentiments which , exalted in themselves, seemed to lose something of their character by the frequency with which they were presented, - these were some of the traits which Transcendentalism showed'¹.

Margaret Fuller herself , < in 1840 > has described the whole Transcendental movement, its causes, rising from an attempt to counteract the materialistic tendencies of our country; but necessarily being based upon "this hasty way of thinking" , upon superficiality, and "upon the slight literary culture here which is mostly English" , - for this was all that there was at the time for New England Transcendentalism to build upon - it brought forth 'mystics' < as she names the Transcendentalists here > "with partial views, imperfectly developed characters, and frequent want of practical sagacity". She, however, expresses hope that her friends will correct their errors and "ascertain their grounds and arise with clearness". The following is the passage.

"1840. > Since the Revolution, there has been little, in the circumstances of this country, to call out the higher sentiments. The effect of continued prosperity is the same on nations as on individuals, - it leaves the nobler faculties undeveloped. The need of bringing out the physical resources of

¹
Hoar 91.

a vast extent of country, the commercial and political fever incident to our institutions, tend to fix the eyes of men on what is local and temporary, on the external advantages of their condition. The superficial diffusion of knowledge, unless attended by a correspondent deepening of its sources, is likely to vulgarize rather than to raise the thought of a nation, depriving them of another sort of education through sentiments of reverence, and leading the multitude to believe themselves capable of judging what they but dimly discern. They see a wide surface, and forget the difference between seeing and knowing. In this hasty way of thinking and living they traverse so much ground that they forget that not the sleeping railroad passenger, but the botanist, the geologist, the poet, really see the country, and that, to the former, 'a miss is as good as a mile'. In a word, the tendency of circumstances has been to make our people superficial, irreverent, and more anxious to get a living than to live mentally and morally. This tendency is no way balanced by the slight literary culture common here, which is mostly English, and consists in a careless reading of publications of the day, having the same utilitarian tendency with our own proceedings. The infrequency of acquaintance with any of the great fathers of English lore marks this state of things.

New England is now old enough, - some there have leisure enough, - to look at all this; and the consequence is a

violent reaction, in a small minority, against a mode of culture that rears such fruits, . They see that political freedom does not necessarily produce liberality of mind, nor freedom in church institutions - vital religion; and, seeing that these changes cannot be wrought from without inwards, they are trying to quicken the soul, that they may work from within outwards. Disgusted with the vulgarity of a commercial aristocracy; they become radicals; disgusted with the materialistic working of 'rational' religion, they become mystics. They quarrel with all that is, because it is not spiritual enough. They would, perhaps, be patient if they thought this the mere sensuality of childhood in our nation, which it might outgrow; but they think that they see the evil widening, deepening, - not only debasing the life, but corrupting the thought of our people, and they feel that if they know not well what should be done, yet that the duty of every good man is to utter a protest against what is done amiss.

Is this protest indiscriminating? are these opinions crude? do these proceedings threaten to sap the bulwarks on which men at present depend? I confess it all, yet I see in these men promise of a better wisdom than in their opponents. Their hope for man is grounded on his destiny as an immortal soul, and not as a mere comfort-loving inhabitant of earth, or as a subscriber to the social contract. It was not meant that

the soul should cultivate the earth, but that the earth should educate and maintain the soul. Man is not made for society, but society is made for man. No institution can be good which does not tend to improve the individual. In these principles I have confidence so profound, that I am not afraid to trust those who hold them, despite their partial views, imperfectly developed characters, and frequent want of practical sagacity. I believe, if they have opportunity to state and discuss their opinions, they will gradually sift them, ascertain their grounds and aims with clearness, and do the work this country needs. I hope for them as for the leaven that is hidden in the bushel of meal, till 'all be leavened'. The leaven is not good by itself, neither is the meal; let them combine, and we shall yet have bread¹''.

The desire of the Transcendentalist to withdraw from the hum and bustle of city, and to a certain extent, village life, that he might be more ''alone with the Alone'' and live more a life of meditation probably had something to do with the establishment of a community by some of them at Brook Farm, a scheme with which Margaret Fuller was never in sympathy, though she visited her friends there. Fourierism, the doctrines of which the Brook-farmers adopted were similar to those of Rousseau, which Margaret Fuller had long outgrown, much as she was charmed by Rousseau when she first read him.

¹
Mem.II.26-29.

Margaret Fuller discusses in ''Woman in the Nineteenth Century'' at some length the doctrines and social reform schemes of Fourier and compares them to those of Goethe. After praising Fourier and his system for some admirable traits and even calling him an ''Apostle of the new order that is to rise from love'' she continues:

''The mind of Fourier, though grand and clear, was in some respects superficial. He was a stranger to the highest experiences. His eye was fixed on the outward more than on the inward needs of man''.

On the opposite side of the advancing army leads the great Apostle of individual culture, Goethe. Swedenborg makes organization and union the necessary results of solitary thought. Fourier, whose nature was, above all, constructive, looked to them too exclusively. Better institutions, she thought, will make better men. Goethe expressed in every way the other side. If one man could present better forms, the rest could not use them till ripe for them.

Fourier says, As the institutions, so the men: All follies are excusable for ignorance and folly. A man can grow in any place if he will.

''Ay! but Goethe'' , she continues, somewhat disagreeing with him as to the sweeping generalityⁱ of the sentence just preceding, ''bad institutions are prison walls and impure air, that make him stupid, so that he does not will''!

And Fourier she criticizes for the same reason, that is for making claims that will be difficult or impossible to realize. "And then, Fourier, do not expect to change mankind at once, or even 'in three generations' , by arrangement of groups and series, or flourish of trumpets for active industry. If these attempts are made by unready men, they will fail."

From what follows she rather favors a union of the two systems, that is building up and strengthening the character from within and improving the institutions of society at the same time, a doctrine in which Goethe himself without doubt also believed.

After discussing the great characters in Goethe's masterpieces, especially the women, Margaret Fuller expresses her satisfaction with his doctrine and shows wherein Goethe is superior to Fourier and why she prefers the former.

"In all these expressions of woman" , she says, "the aim of Goethe is satisfactory to me. He aims at a pure self-subsistence, and a free development of any powers with which¹ they may be gifted by Nature.

.... Goethe's book < Wilhelm Meister > bodes an era of freedom like its own of "extraordinary, generous seeking" and new relations. New individualities shall be developed in the actual world, which shall advance upon it as gently as the figures come out upon his canvas.

¹

Women in the Nineteenth Century.128.

I have indicated on this point the coincidence between his hopes and those of Fourier, though his < Goethe's > are directed by an infinitely higher and deeper knowledge of human nature¹''.

''It is to Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Wandering years that I would especially refer, as these volumes contain the sum of the Sage's observations during a long life, as to what man should do under present circumstances, to obtain mastery over outward, through an initiation into inward life, and severe discipline of faculty²''.

One is reminded in reading over her discussion of the different schemes for social reforms of what James Freeman Clarke said of her.

''She knew her thoughts, as we know each others faces; and opinions with most of us so vague, shadowy and shifting were in her mind substantial and distinct realities....No sophis could pass off on her a counterfeit piece of intellectual money. This gave a comprehensive quality to her mind, most imposing and convincing, as it enabled her to show the one Truth, or the one law, manifesting itself in such various phenomena. Add to this her professed faith in truth, which made her a Realist of that order that thoughts to her were things.³''

¹ Woman in the Nineteenth Century. 130.

² ibid. 126 f.

³ Mem. I. 113.

It is this realism, developed in Margaret Fuller under Goethe's influence which Mrs. Howe seems to have in mind when she writes of her:

1

'Her sense was solid, and her meaning clear and worthy.

'Whilst she embellished the moment', says Mr. Emerson, 'her² conversation had the merit of being solid and true'. Certainly this seems true: that the terms and definitions applied to 'Transcendental', such as 'lost in the clouds'; 'transcending common sense', 'out of touch with real practical life', or put differently, 'not in harmony with common sense' 'airy', 'flighty', 'dreamy', etc. do not well fit her.

Margaret Fuller was unlike the Transcendentalists too, in that she was not at all given to speculation on vague philosophical questions as such. She wanted something practical and that bore some real relation to her inner life and development. 'I have always felt', she says, 'that man must know³ how to stand firm on the ground before he can fly'.

And again, 'I do not want a system which shall suffice to my character, and in whose application I shall have faith. I do not wish to reflect⁴ always, if reflecting must be always

1

Howe 85.

2

Mem.I.312.

3

ibid.I.20.

4

Goethe in his 'Sprüche in Prosa' < 35 > Der Abendglaube gehört zum Wesen des Menschen und flüchtet sich, wenn man ihn ganz und gar zu verdrängen denkt, in die wunderlichsten Ecken und Winkel, von wo er auf einmal, wenn er einigermaßen sicher zu sein glaubt, wieder hervortritt'.

*Wrong passage quoted by mistake.
See next page, footnote. F.A.B.*

about ones identity, whether 'ich' am the true 'ich'* etc. I wish to arrive at that point where I can trust myself, and leave off saying, 'It seems to me' , and boldly feel, It is so to me .My character has got its natural regulator, my heart beats, my lips speak truth, I can walk alone, or offer my arm to a friend, or if I lean on another, it is not the debility of sickness, but only wayside weariness. This is the philosophy I want;
 this much would satisfy me.¹

~~At XXXXX XXXX < XXXXXX XX XXXX, XX > 'XXXXXXXXXX XXX
 XXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXX XXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXX' .~~

With Novalis she agrees that 'Philosophy is peculiar home-sickness, an overmastering desire to be at home' , but asks, 'But what is there all comprehending , eternally-
 conscious about that?'²

Again in a letter dated Sept. 1832, sharing evidently Goethe's contempt for Metaphysics which found its clear expression in the advice of Mephistopheles to the student, she asks, 'What is all the use of metaphysics? A moderate portion taken at stated intervals, I hold to be of much use as discipline of the faculties. I only object to them as having an absorbing and anti-productive tendency.' 'The brain' , she concludes, 'does not easily get too dry for that < Meta-
 physics >'³

¹ Mem.I.123.

² ibid.133.

³ ibid.124.

* Wie kann man sich selbst kennen lernen? Durch Betrachten (Reflexion) niemals, wol aber durch Handeln.

Several years later in meditating a life of Goethe she speaks again of "that indisposition, or even dread of the study of metaphysics."¹

From these statements and from what she said of the individual philosophers whom she studied it is very clear that, unlike the Transcendentalists, she had so little liking for speculative philosophy that, like Goethe, she did not find this a congenial field of study at all.

Dr. Goddard seems to have tried to make a great deal out of the single passage from one of Margaret Fuller's letters, concerning the influence of Emerson on her, "You question me as to the nature of Mr. E.'s preaching" , she says, "I answer that his influence has been more beneficial to me than that of any American, and that from him I first learned what is meant by an inward life"² .

But the very fact alone that she confines her statement to American, and does not make it perfectly general, is unmistakable evidence that she had in mind some one else not American who exercised a greater and more beneficial influence on her. She may have discovered her inward life through Mr. Emerson's preaching, and no doubt he had a considerable influence on her, greater than that of any other American. He doubtless awakened in her reminiscences of her subconscious Puritan ideas. But as

¹
Mem. I. 127.

²
ibid. 194. Quoted by H. C. Goddard, "Studies in New England Transcendentalism" . 103 f.

proof that Goethe's influence was greater and that he was the chief source for her inner life and development, we have, both her own words, and those of Emerson himself, words which are¹ conclusive and leave no doubt whatever.

It is also well known that Margaret Fuller and Emerson were different in character and could not agree in their doctrines, religious as well as philosophical. Emerson was preeminently a thinker. He placed his greatest emphasis upon the intellect, often to the exclusion of the other faculties of the inner life. He practically lived on his thoughts, and doubtless seemed often as dry and cold as some of his Puritan ancestors. All this was true despite his intellectual liberality and dissent from all traditional formal church creeds. He seldom or never came into a genuine heart to heart touch with his fellow beings, nor experienced any real glow of the emotional side of his nature. This fact explains all the severe criticism before noted which he hurls against Goethe. Goethe was too human for him. He laid too much stress upon the emotional and material side of man's nature to please him. Living only an intellectual and ascetic life, and still holding somewhat closely in practice to the traditional Puritan church doctrines, he naturally distrusted and often disdained anything that had to do with the emotions of the heart and the natural inclinations of human nature. He could not see that Goethe in taking note

¹

Cf. above. Her study of German.

of this part of human nature meant to give them a healthy development and to refine them, bringing them, as Margaret Fuller has so beautifully expressed it, 'into harmony with his highest thought' , instead of trying to 'crucify' them, as the traditional church had long attempted to do. Because Goethe takes this side of human nature into account and writes of it Emerson calls him immoral, and says 'The Puritan in me¹ accepts no apology for bad morals in such as he'.

Margaret Fuller calls his philosophy the 'white light' , to distinguish it from the rosy light and glow of feeling expressed in the morning and evening skies. Margaret Fuller lived an intense life full of glow and feeling, as well as thought, -"Viel denken, mehr empfinden",- as Goethe puts it -
 < Sprüche in Prosa - 641- >: 'Der denkende Mensch irrt besonders, wenn er sich nach Ursache und Wirkung erkundigt; sie beide zusammen machen das unteilbare Phänomen. Wer das zu erkennen weiss, ist auf dem rechten Wege zum Tun, zur Tat. Das genetische Verfahren leitet uns schon auf bessere Wege, ob man gleich damit auch nicht ausreicht' .Margaret Fuller believed that to think was only a part of life, and had little sympathy in confining her joys to 'mental ecstacies' as those of Mr. Emerson chiefly were. The passage quoted above, 'Is it not nobler and truer to live than to think' , shows how deeply

¹

Carlisle-Emerson Correspondence, p.29.-Boston,1888.

she felt this. "She and Emerson met" , says Caroline H.Dall,
 "like Pyramus and Thisbe, a blank wall between. With Alcott
 she had no patience"¹ . And again, "E.P.P. < Elizabeth
 Palmer Peabody, one of Margaret Fuller's most intimate friends >
 got into a little maze, trying to introduce Margaret and R.W.E.
 to each other, - a consummation however devoutly to be wished
 will never happen"² .

"While bound to each other by mutual esteem and admirat-
 ion" , says Mrs.Howe, "Margaret and Mr.Emerson were opposites
 in natural tendency, if not in character. While Mr.Emerson never
 appeared to be modified by any change of circumstance, never
melted nor took fire , but was always and everywhere himself,
 the soul of Margaret was subject to a glowing passion which
 raised the temperature of the social atmosphere around her.---
 A priestess of life-glories, she magnified her office.--- Mr.
 Emerson had also a priesthood, but of a different order. The
 calm, severe judgement, the unpardoning taste, the deliberati-
 on which not only preceded but also followed his utterances ,
 carried him to a remoteness from the common life of common
 people and allowed no intermingling of this life with his own."³

Nothing characterizes better the difference between the
 Puritan spiritualist and the pupil of Goethe's broad humanity
 than the following passage by the reporter of the "Conversations

¹
 Margaret and her Friends.13.

²
 ibid. 118 f.

³
 Howe 84 f.

"Mr.E. only served to display her powers" , writes the reporter of the "'Conversations'" .With his sturdy reiteration of his uncompromising idealism, his absolute^{denial} of the fact of human nature, he gave her opportunity and excitement to unfold and illustrate her realism and acceptance of conditions. What is so noble is, that her realism is transparent with idea,- her human nature is the germ of a divine life. She proceeds in her search after the unity of things, the divine harmony, not by exclusion, as Mr.E.says, but by comprehension, - and so, no poorest , saddest spirit, but she will lead to hope and faith²".

This last passage is important, for Margaret Fuller's realism is exactly the kind in which Goethe believed, a realism that contained an ideal truth. Margaret Fuller's cry was "'Truth at all hazards!'" But as it was with Goethe, "'it was the ideal truth, which Margaret followed so zealously,'³a truth when expressed, that gave her hearers faith in humanity and in themselves, and called out the best that was in them.

Mr.Emerson himself gave a faithful description of the difference between his character and belief and that of Margaret Fuller.

1

Compare Goethe's Tasso:

"'Die letzten Enden aller Dinge will
Sein Geist zusammenfassen''; and Faust <1.382-4>:
"'Dass ich erkenne, was die Welt
Im Innersten zusammenhält.'"

2

Memoirs I.349 f.

3

Howe, 136.

Fuller. "Our moods were very different" , he says, "and I remember that at the very time when I, slow and cold, had come fully to admire her genius, and was congratulating myself on the solid good understanding that subsisted between us, I was surprised with hearing it taxed by her with superficiality and halfness. She stigmatized our friendship as commercial. It seemed her magnanimity was not met, but I prized her only for the thoughts and pictures she brought me; - so many thoughts, so many facts, yesterday, - so many to-day; - when there was an end of things to tell the game was up: that, I did not know, as a friend should know, to prize a silence as much as a discourse, - and hence a forlorn feeling was inevitable; a poor counting of thoughts, and a taking the census of virtues, was the unjust reception so much love found. On one occasion, her grief broke into words like these: 'The religious nature remained unknown to you, because it could not proclaim itself, but claimed to be divined. The deepest soul that approached you was, in your eyes, nothing but a magic lantern, always bringing out pretty shows of life'. "¹

Lacking, of course, this truly human warmth and glow of the soul, the depth of her "Gemüth" which she had found through Goethe, and demanded from all her friends towards herself, Emerson could not understand her tone, and asked her to explain. "Let us hold hard to the common sense ," he said to her by letter, "and let us speak in the positive degree".

'Does water meet water' , she asks satirically, 'no need of wine, sugar, spice, or even a soupçon of lemon to remind of a tropical climate? I fear me not. Yet, dear positives, believe me¹ superlatively yours, Margaret. '

Again she writes to Emerson of what is going on in her inner life. Somewhat of a change and a deepening of her nature was taking place about this time <1840>. But at the end of the letter she says: 'Why do I write thus to one who must ever regard the deepest tones of my nature as those of childish fancy or worldly discontent?'² At another time she writes a prose and poetic description of the Drachenfels , full of feeling and says: 'I had twenty minds to send it to you as a literary curiosity; then I thought this might destroy relations, and I might not be able to be calm and chip marble with you any more,³ if I talked to you in magnetism and music'. Emerson ,slow, cool, and collected as ever, reasons over the matter and reaches the following conclusion:

'Her nature was so large and receptive, so sympathetic, ...so womanly in her understanding... Her heart was beneath her⁴ intellectualness, her mind was reverent, her spirit devout'. Nevertheless 'She was vexed with the want of sympathy on my⁵ part' and 'In short, Margaret often loses herself in sentimentality... Her integrity was perfect, and she was led and followed by love, and was really bent on truth, but too

¹ Memoirs I. 289

² ibid. 291.

³ ibid. 230.

⁴ ibid. 316

⁵ ibid. 308

indulgent to the meteors of her fancy."¹

The truth is that Emerson the abstract "'cool'" thinker never penetrated into the secret of her personality.

From these passages it is perfectly clear that Emerson was never her "'spiritual father'", nor that he exercised on her inner life anything like an overpowering influence, but that she had a personality distinctively different from his, and that the doctrine in which she believed and which she acted out in life was altogether unlike his, in that the fundamental thought in her doctrine was, as in that of Goethe, the harmonious development of the whole being, the heart as well as the mind. In Emerson's spiritualistic doctrine the emotional, and truly human side of character was largely neglected, much as it was under Puritanism or Unitarianism.

It may be argued that because Margaret Fuller was the editor of the "'Dial'", which was considered a Transcendental organ, therefore she must also of necessity have been a Transcendentalist. But in one of her letters is clearly stated the fact that she never considered the "'Dial'" at the beginning, nor at any time during her editorship, a magazine belonging to any one sect, party, or confession, but as Mr. Emerson also bears witness, purely "'eclectic and miscellaneous'"², an organ to allow free expression of thought and ideas in literature, religion and philosophy, from any and all, whatsoever their creed or belief. On March 22, 1840, she writes:

¹
Memoirs I. 308.

²
ibid. 323.

"What others can do, - whether all that has been said is the mere restlessness of discontent, or there are thoughts really struggling for utterance, - will be tested now. A perfectly free organ is to be offered for the expression of individual thought and character. There are no party measures to be carried, no particular standard to be set up. A fair, calm tone, a recognition of universal principles, will, I hope, pervade the essays in every form. I trust there will be a spirit neither of dogmatism nor of compromise, and that this journal will aim, not at leading public opinion, but at stimulating each man to judge for himself, and to think more deeply and more nobly, by letting him see how some minds are kept alive by wise self trust.... We shall manifest free action, as far as it goes, , and a high aim. It were much if a periodical could be kept open, not to accomplish an outward object, but merely to afford an avenue for what of liberal and calm thought might¹ be originated among us by the wants of individual minds."

In another letter dated April 19, 1840, Margaret Fuller says, with reference to what the people expect of the "'Dial'", and what they will not find.

"Things go on pretty well , but doubtless people will be disappointed, for they seem to be looking for the gospel of² Transcendentalism'".

¹
Memoirs I. 25.

²
ibid. II. 25f.

Expressing her public spirit as well as the much broader aim of the magazine, she says, 'It is for dear New England that I want this review'¹.

It is clear that Margaret Fuller, though she doubtless held some opinions in common with Transcendentalists never considered herself as one of them. She is always careful to speak of them in the third person. She always makes a sharp distinction between 'they' and 'I', and never says 'we' in referring to them, throughout her works. She saw clearly the difference between her belief and theirs.

Nevertheless, Margaret Fuller sympathizes with the Transcendentalists in some respects. 'Their noble scheme', she says, 'their poetic manifestations, prophecies to man his eventual destiny.... It is on this ground that I sympathize with the 'Transcendental party', and that I feel their aim to be the true one. They acknowledge in the nature of men an arbiter for his deeds, - a standard transcending sense and time.'²

Remembering, perhaps, what Goethe said of christian mystics, < Sprüche in Prosa 297 > 'Christliche Mystiker sollte es gar nicht geben, da die Religion selber Mysterien darbietet. Auch gehen sie immer gleich ins Abstruse, in den Abgrund des Subjekts'. She finds objection to carrying the idea of 'transcending sense and time' too far, as it seemed to her the Transcendentalists had done. 'They are but the beginning of their course',

¹
Memoirs I. 26.

²
ibid. II. 29.

she says, "and will, I hope, learn how to make use of the past, as well as to aspire for the future, and be true in the present moment"¹.

"Civilization" , she writes elsewhere, "must be homogeneous, - must be a natural growth."²

It is the extreme romantic subjectivity and lack of historical sense in Transcendentalism that Margaret Fuller here criticizes. She did not believe, as they did, in cutting absolutely loose from the past, but believed in preserving what was worthy, , for , as Mr.Channing writes:

"By their very posture of mind, as seekers of the new, the Transcendentalists were critics and 'come-outers' from the old. Neither the church, the state, the college, society, nor even reform associations, had a hold upon their hearts. The past might be well enough for those who, without make-belief, could put faith in common dogmas and usages; but for them ... the herald- trump of freedom was heard upon the mountains ... the journal, the letter, became of greater worth than the printed page."³

With this extreme, revolutionary note Margaret Fuller did not at all agree. She agreed with many of the ideas of reform, of course, but to reject all that the past had left us as an heirloom, good and bad alike, seemed to her too radical.

"Utopia" , she writes, "it is impossible to build up.

¹
Memoirs II. 29

²
Woman in the Nineteenth Century. 1. 186

³
Memoirs II. 14.

At least my hopes for our race on this one planet are more limited than those of most of my friends''. ''I accept'', she says with Goethe, ''the limitations of human nature, and believe in a wise acknowledgement of them, one of the best conditions of progress''.¹

Again in the following passage she clearly does not consider herself a Transcendentalist.

''My position as a woman, and the many private duties which have filled up my life have prevented my thinking deeply on several of the great subjects which these friends < the Transcendentalists > have at heart. I suppose if I ever become capable of judging I shall differ from most of them on important points. But I am not afraid to trust any who are true and in intent noble with their own course, not to aid in enabling them to express their thoughts, whether I coincide with them or not''.²

One of the points in which she, the pupil of Goethe, differed essentially from the Transcendentalists was as to what should be done with the ''Material'' part of man, that is, his physical nature. They, in common with the other religious sects, and, as we have pointed out, with Kant's philosophy, had regarded this side of man as the seat of original sin, or radical evil, and were consequently decrying continually its irrepressible assertions as ''sluggishness'' and ''worldliness of spirit''.³

Margaret Fuller felt sharply that it was here where the difference between the concealed Puritanism of the Transcen-

¹ Memoirs II. 29.

² ibid. 29f.

³ ibid. 30.

dentalits and the progressive and higher ethical principles of Goethe-Schiller becomes apparent. It is, in a way, the difference between the idealist and the realist which Schiller describes so masterfully in his essay "'Ueber Naive und Sentimentale^{ische} Dichtung'".

"'This is the real life'" , Margaret Fuller writes, "'which is subordinated too, not merged in, the ideal. He is only wise who can bring the lowest act of his life into sympathy with its highest thought. And this I take to be the only aim of our pilgrimage here. I agree with those who think that no true philosophy will try to ignore or annihilate the material part of man, but will rather seek to put it in its place, as servant¹ and minister to the soul.'"

The following passage shows further how her belief differed from that of any orthodox church. In a letter dated August, 1847, she writes:

"'I know many of the noble exiles, pining for their natural sphere; many of them seek in Jesus the guide and friend, as you do. For me it is my nature to wish to go straight to the Creative Spirit.'²"

A letter written at an earlier period, but after she had studied Goethe, sheds still more light on her belief and philosophy of life, showing how she rejected all systems of positive religion and stuck to her idea of self-development through experience in life.

¹
Memoirs II. 30f.

²
At Home and Abroad, 425.

'Loving or feeble natures need a positive religion, a visible refuge, a protection, as much in the passionate season of youth as in those stages nearer to the grave. But mine is not such'¹. 'I cannot endure', she says in another passage, 'to be one of those shallow beings, who can never get beyond the primer of experience, - who are ever saying,-

''Ich habe geglaubt, nun glaub' ich erst recht,
Und geht es auch wunderbarlich, geht es auch schlecht,
Ich bleibe im gläubigen Orden''²

'When disappointed, I do not ask or wish consolation, - I wish to know and feel my pain, to investigate its nature and its source; I will not have my thoughts diverted, or my feelings soothed.'³

is

How near this, to what Goethe says in Faust 1.1768ff.:

''Mein Busen, der von Wissensdrang geheilt ist,
Soll keinen Schmerzen künftig sich verschliessen,
Und was der ganzen Menschheit zugeteilt ist,
Will ich in meinem innern Selbst genießen.
Mit meinem Geist das Höchste und Tiefste greifen,
Ihr Wohl und Weh auf meinen Busen häufen
Und so mein eigen Selbst zu ihrem Selbst erweitern,
Und, wie sie selbst, am End auch ich zerscheitern.''

'I believe', she continues, 'in eternal progression.

I believe in a God, a Beauty and Perfection to which I am to strive all my life for assimilation. From these two articles of belief I draw the rules by which I strive to regulate my life...

¹
Memoirs I. 135.

²
ibid. 82.

³ ibid. 135.

Tangible promises! well defined hopes! are things of which I do not now feel the need. At present my soul is intent on this life, and I think of religion as its rule.¹

Again the following passage shows how thoroughly Goethean her doctrine really was:

"I do not see how it is possible to go further beyond the results of a limited human experience than those do who pretend to settle the origin and nature of sin, the final destiny of souls, and the whole plan of the Causal Spirit with regard to them. I think those who take < this > view have not examined themselves and do not know the ground on which they stand.

I acknowledge no limit, set up by man's opinion, as to the capacity of man. 'Care is taken', I see it, 'that the trees grow not up into heaven'; but to me it seems, the more vigorously they aspire, the better. Only let it be a vigorous, not a partial or sickly, aspiration. Let not the tree forget its root.

..."I would beat with the living heart of the world and understand all the moods," she continues in exact accordance with the spirit of 'Faust' and 'Wilhelm Meister', "even the fancies and fantasies of nature. I dare to trust to the interpreting spirit to bring me out all right at last - establish truth through error. Whether this be the best way is of no consequence, if it be the one individual character points out.

¹
Memoirs L. 135.

I the truth can only know,

Tested by life's most fiery glow.

Let me stand in my age with all its waters flowing around me.

If they sometimes subdue, they must finally upbear me, for I seek the universal, - and that must be the best.

The Spirit, no doubt, leads in every movement of my time: if I seek the How , I shall find it, as well as if I busied myself more with the Why. Whatever is , is right if only men are steadily bent to make it so, by comprehending and fulfilling its design.¹

From all these passages combined, it is perfectly clear that Margaret Fuller was not a Transcendentalist in the accepted sense of the word, that she saw the difference between their belief and hers, and rejected their system as she did all other formal creeds. She considered herself perfectly free from all of them and felt absolutely no need or inclination for them. Even the idea of an objective religion, a church that had an existence anywhere outside of the human heart, whether in a formulated creed or system, was to her, the outspoken individualist, inconceivable, though she felt no hostility toward such systems or creeds. In her "'Credo'" of 1842 we may see how she looked upon them, one and all.²

Like Goethe and Schiller, she believed that out of our own inner being, out of the inner heart and self is determined the highest laws for individual growth and action, and not from any principle or law that may be imposed upon us by anything

¹ At Home and Abroad , 72f.

² See page ¹⁹⁰ 182.

that has its existence outside of our being, whether religion, or philosophy. She believed that ultimately we have to turn back into ourselves, into our inner souls, to our highest instincts,¹ for the fountain of life. She believed that this germ in the soul is the divine source of our spiritual life; in fact that human nature itself is divine. 'O for a more calm, more pervading faith in the divinity of my own nature!' she cries.²

The Transcendentalists also believed in the divinity of instinct and of human nature, but it was from a christian standpoint, decidedly more orthodox than hers.

As has been said Margaret Fuller believed that no compliance with any formal creed or system of religion was necessary, or in fact have any relation to the highest development of a really free soul. In the sentence 'Every man his own priest and the heart the only true church,' she gives her real belief. This doctrine she praises, calling it 'a doctrine of thinking and aspiring minds'.³

¹ Compare Schiller's poem, 'Schöne Individualität':
 'Einig sollst du zwar sein, doch eines nicht mit dem Ganzen.
 Durch die Vernunft bist du eins, einig mit ihm durch das Herz.
 Stimme des Ganzen ist deine Vernunft, dein Herz bist du selber:
 Wohl dir, wenn die Vernunft immer im Herzen dir wohnt.'

²
 Memoirs I. 176.

³
 At Home and Abroad, 55f.

Margaret Fuller's Religious Creed.

In the following pages is published for the first time in its complete form Margaret Fuller's religious creed of 1842, as it stands in her own handwriting among her other manuscript in the Boston Public Library, left there by Mr. T. W. Higginson, one of Margaret Fuller's friends and biographers. The creed contained originally two and one half lines more, but these have been completely obliterated, and blotted out with ink in the same manner as parts of many of her letters, presumably for the purpose of suppressing the contents.

This creed has been only partially published before in Margaret Fuller's Memoirs, and there with interpolations, omissions, with words changed and sometimes whole sentences rewritten.¹

The creed as it stands, complete, by no means claims to be a comprehensive formulation of her entire religious and philosophical belief, as any one will soon discover in reading her works and comparing what she expresses in them on religion and philosophy with her creed as given here. The following note sent by Margaret Fuller with the Credo to a friend shows how she herself considered it.

"Ever since - told me how his feelings had changed towards Jesus, I have wished much to write some sort of a Credo, out of my present state, but have had no time till last night. I have not satisfied myself in the least, and have written very

¹ Mem. II, 88 ff.

hastily, yet, though not full enough to be true, this statement is nowhere false to me".¹

A Credo.

"There is a spirit uncontainable and uncontained.-Within it all manifestation is contained, whether of good (accomplishment) or evil (obstruction). To itself its depths are unknown. By living it seeks to know itself, thus evolving plants, animals, men, suns, stars, angels, and, it is to be presumed and infinity of forms not yet visible in the horizon of this being who now writes.

Its modes of operation are twofold. First, as genius inspires genius, love love, angel-mother brings forth angel-child. This is the uninterrupted generation, or publication of spirit taking upon itself congenial forms. Second, conquering obstruction finding the like in the unlike. This is a secondary generation, a new dynasty, as virtue for simplicity, faith for oneness, charity for pure love.

Then begins the genesis of man, as through his consciousness he attests the laws which regulated the divine genesis. The Father is justified in the Son.

The mind of man asks 'Why was this second development?-Why seeks the divine to exchange best for better, bliss for hope, domesticity for knowledge?' We reject the plan in the universe which the Spirit permitted as the condition of conscious life. We reject it in the childhood of the soul's life. The cry of

¹ Mem. II, p. 88.

infancy is why should we seek God when he is always there. Why seek what is ours as soul's through indefinite pilgrimages, and burdensome cultures?

The intellect has no answer to this question, yet as we through faith and purity of deed enter into the nature of the Divine it is answered from our own experience. We understand, though we cannot explain the mystery of something gained where all already is.

God, we say, is Love. If we believe this we must trust him. Whatever has been permitted by the law of being must be for good, and only in time not good. We do trust Him and are led forward by experience. Sight gives experience of outward life, faith of inward. We then discern, however faintly, the necessary harmony of the two lives. The moment we have broken through an obstruction, not accidentally, but by the aid of faith, we begin to realize why any was permitted. We begin to interpret the universe and deeper depths are opened with each soul that is convinced. For it would seem that the Divine expressed his meaning to himself more distinctly in man than in the other forms of our sphere, and through him uttered distinctly the Hallelujah which the other forms of nature only intimate.

Wherever man remains imbedded in nature, whether from sensuality or because he is not yet awakened to consciousness, the purpose of the whole remains unfulfilled, hence our displeasure when man is not, in a sense above nature. Yet when he is not bound so closely with all other manifestations, as duly to express their spirit, we are also displeased. He must be at once the

highest form of nature and conscious of the meaning she has been striving successively to unfold through those below him.

Centuries pass,-whole races of men are expended in the effort to produce one that shall realize this idea and publish spirit in the human form. But here and there there is a degree of success. Life enough is lived through a man to justify the great difficulties and obstructions attendant on the existence of mankind.

Then through all the realms of thought vibrates the affirmation "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased", and many souls encouraged and instructed offer themselves to the baptism, whether of water, whether of fire.

I do not mean to lay an undue stress upon the position and office of man, merely because I am of his race, and understand best the scope of his destiny. The history of the earth, the motions of the heavenly bodies suggest already modes of being higher than his, and which fulfill more deeply this office of interpretation. But I do suppose his life to be the rivet in one series of links in the great chain, and that all these higher existences are analogous to his. Music suggests them, and when carried on these strong wings through realms which on the ground we discern but dimly, we foresee how the next step in the soul's upward course shall interpret man to the universe as he now interprets those forms beneath himself; for there is ever evolving a consciousness of consciousness, and a soul of the soul. To know is to bring to light somewhat yet to be known. And as we elucidate the previous workings of spirit, we ourselves become

a new material for its development.

Man is himself one tree in the garden of the spirit, From his trunk grow many branches, social contracts, art, literature, religion, etc. The trunk gives the history of the human race. It has grown up higher into the heavens, but its several acorns, though each expressed the all, did not ripen beyond certain contours and a certain size.

In the history of matter, however, laws have been more and more clearly discerned, and so in the history of spirit, many features of the God man have put forth; several limbs, disengaged themselves. One is what men call revelation, different from other kinds only in being made through the acts and words of men. Its law is identical whether displaying itself as genius or piety, but its modes of expression are distinct dialects though of similar structure.

The way it is done is this. As the Oak desires to plant its acorns, so do souls become the fathers of souls. Some do this through the body, others through the intellect. The first class are citizens; the second artists, philosophers, lawgivers, poets, saints,- All these are anointed, all Immanuel, all Messiah, so far as they are true to the law of their incorruptible existence; brutes and devils so far as they are subjected to that of their corruptible existence.

But yet further, as wherever there is a tendency, a form is gradually evolved as its type; as the rose represents the flower world and is its queen, as the lion and eagle compress within themselves the noblest that is expressed in the animal

kingdom, as the telescope and microscope express the high and searching desires of man; and the organ and (- -)¹his completeness, so has each tribe of thoughts and lives its law upon it to produce a king, a form which shall stand before it a visible representation of the aim of its strivings. It gave laws with Confucius and Moses; it tried them with Brahma, it lived its life of eloquence in the Apollo, it wandered with Osiris. It lived one life as Plato, another as Michael Angelo, or Luther. It has made Gods, it has developed men. Seeking, making it produce ideals of the developments of which humanity is capable, and one of the highest, nay in some respects the very highest, it has yet known was the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

I suppose few are so much believers in his history as myself. I believe (in my own way) in the long preparation of ages, and the truth of the prophecy. I see a necessity in the character of Jesus why Abraham should be the founder of his nation, Moses its lawgiver, and David its king and poet. I believe in the genesis, as given in the Old Testament. I believe in the prophets, and that they foreknew, not only what their nation required, but what the development of universal man required, a Redeemer, an Atoner, one to make, at the due crisis, voluntarily the sacrifice Abraham would have made of the child of his old age, a lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world. I believe Jesus came when the time was ripe, that he was peculiarly a messenger and son of God. I have nothing to say in denial (of) the story of his birth. Whatever the true circumstances were in time he was born of a virgin, and the tale expresses a

¹ Word totally illegible.

truth of the soul. I have no objection to the miracles, except where they do not happen to please me. Why should not a soul so consecrate and intent develop new laws and make matter plastic? I can imagine him walking the waves and raising the dead without any violation of my usual habits of thought. He would not remain in the tomb, they say, surely not; death is impossible to such a being. He remained upon earth and all who have met him since on the way have felt their souls burn within them. He ascended to Heaven, surely, it could not be otherwise.

But when I say to you, also, that though I think all this really happened, it is of no consequence to me whether it did or not, that the ideal truth such illustrations present to me, is enough, and that if the mind of St. John, for instance, had conceived the whole and offered it to us as a poem, to me, as far as I know, it would be just as real. You see how wide the gulf that separates me from the Christian Church.

Yet you also see that I believe in the history of the Jewish nation and its denouement in Christ, as presenting one great type of spiritual existence. It is very dear to me and occupies a large portion of my thoughts. I have no trouble, so far from the sacrifice required of Abraham, for instance, striking me as it does Mr. Parker, I accept it as prefiguring a thought to be fully expressed by the death of Christ (yet forget not that they who passed their children through the fire to Moloch were pious also, and not more superstitious than an exclusive devotion to Christ has made many of his followers). "Do you not place Christ then in a higher place than Socrates, for instance,

or Michel Angelo?' Yes! Because if his life was not truer, it was deeper, and he is a representative of the ages. But then I consider the Greek Apollo as one also!

Have men erred in following Christ as a leader? Perhaps rarely. So great a soul must make its mark for many centuries. Yet only when men are freed from him, and interpret him by the freedom of their own souls, open to visits of the Great Spirit from every side can he be known as he is.

'With your view do you not think he placed undue emphasis on his own position?'

In expression he did so, but this is not in my way either, I should like to treat of this separately in another letter.

Where he was human, not humanly-divine, and where men so received him, there was failure, and is mist and sect,- but never where he brought them to the Father. But they knew not what they did with him then and do not now.

For myself, I believe in Christ because I can do without him; because the truth he announces I see elsewhere intimated; because it is foreshadowed in the very nature of my own being. But I do not wish to do without him. He is constantly aiding and answering me. Only I will not lay any undue and exclusive emphasis on him. When he comes to me I will receive him; when I feel inclined to go by myself, I will. I do not reject the church either. Let men who can with sincerity live in it. I would not - for I believe far more widely than any body of men I know. And as nowhere I worship less than in the places set apart for that purpose, I will not seem to do so. The blue sky

seen above the opposite roof preaches better than any brother, because, at present, a freer, simpler medium of religion. When great souls arise again that dare to be entirely free, yet are humble, gentle, and patient, I will listen, if they wish to speak. But that time is not nigh; these I see around me, here and in Europe, are mostly weak and young.

Would I could myself say with some depth what I feel as to religion in my very soul. It would be a clear note of calm security. But for the present, I think you will see how it is with me as to Christ.

I am grateful here, as everywhere, where spirit bears fruit in fulness. It attests the justice of my desired; it kindles my faith, it rebukes my sloth; it enlightens my resolve. But so does the Apollo, and the beautiful infant, and the summer's earliest rose. It is only one modification of the same harmony. Jesus breaks through the soil of the world's life, like some great river through the else inaccessible plains and valleys. I bless its course. I follow it. But it is a part of the All. There is nothing peculiar about it, but its form.

I will not loathe sects, persuasions, systems, though I cannot abide in **them** one moment, I see most men are still in need of them. To them their banners, their **tents**; let them be Platonists, Fire-worshippers, Christians; let them live in the shadow of the past revelations. But Oh Father of our souls, I seek thee. I seek thee in these forms; and in proportion as they reveal thee more, they lead me beyond themselves. I would learn from them all, looking to thee. I set no limits from the

past to my soul or any soul. Countless ages may not produce another worthy to loose the shoes of Jesus of Nazareth; yet there will rarely come another manifestation of that Word that was in the beginning. For it is not dead, but sleepeth; and if it lives, must declare itself.

All future manifestations will come, like this,- not to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfill. But as an Abraham called for a Moses, a Moses for a David, so does Christ for another ideal.*

We want a life more complete and various than that of Christ. We have had the Messiah to reconcile and teach, let us have another to live out all the symbolical forms of human life with the calm beauty and physical fulness of a Greek god, with the deep consciousness of a Moses with the holy love and purity of Jesus. Amen!

Addenda.

I have not shown with any distinctness how the very greatness of the manifestation in Jesus calls for a greater. But this as the extreme exphasis given by himself to his office, should be treated of separately in a letter or essay on the processes of genius in declaring itself.

I have not shown my deep feeling of his life as a genuine growth, so that his words are all living and they come exactly to memory with all the tone and gesture of the moment, true runes of a divine oracle. It is the same with Shakespeare and

* Two and one-half lines blotted out and obliterated here, so as to make it totally illegible.

in a less degree with Dante.

I have not spoken of men clinging to him from the same weakness that makes them so dependent on a priesthood, or make idols of the objects of affection. In him hearts seek the Friend. Minds the Guide. But this is weakness in religion, as elsewhere. No prop will do. 'The soul must do its own immortal work', and books, lovers, friends, meditations fly from us only to return, when we can do without them. But when we can use and learn from them, yet feel able to do without them they will depart no more. If I were to preach on this subject I would take for a text the words of Jesus:

'Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you'.¹

¹ Margaret Fuller MSS in Boston Public Library.

Summer of 1842.

Though Margaret Fuller has all existence result from "Spirit", yet it is clear that Goethe's doctrine of Spirit-Nature was in her mind, since this spirit (Weltseele) whose "depths are unknown to itself", become conscious only by living and "Seeks to know itself" in the working principle of Nature, "thus evolving plants, animals, men, suns, etc." Comparing what she says here with what Goethe says in his poems, "Proömion", "Eins und Alles", and in "Sprüche in Prosa" (912), we see what close relation there is between her conception of God and the Universe

and that of Goethe.

"Im Namen dessen, der sich selbst erschuf!

Von Ewigkeit im schaffenden Beruf;

.

In jenes Namen, der so oft genannt,

Dem Wesen nach blieb immer unbekannt".¹

Concerning this spirit that "manifests" and "knows itself" in its creations, compare:

"Was wär ein Gott, der nur von Aussen stiesse,

Im Kreis das All am Finger laufen liesse!

Ihm ziemt's die Welt im Innern zu bewegen

Natur in sich, sich in Natur zu hegen".²

And of the continuity of this creation and evolution of "congenial forms", which she speaks of:

"Und umzuschaffen das Geschaffne,

Damit sich's nicht zum Starren waffne,

Wirkt lebendiges Thun.

Und was nicht war, nun will es werden

Zu reinen Sonnen, farbigen Erden, etc."³

"Das Werdende, das ewig wirkt und lebt."⁴

Very near is Margaret Fuller's conception of the phenomena of the All and the activity of the creative Spirit (Welt=seele), which she here describes in the "Credo" to that contained in Goethe's "Sprüche in Prosa" (912):

"Grundeigenschaft der lebendigen Einheit: sich zu trennen

1 Goethe's "Proömion"

2 Goethe's Gedichte, Hempel Ed. II, 368.

3 Goethe's "Eins und Alles"

4 "Faust" I. 346.

sich zu vereinen, sich ins Allgemeine zu ergehen, im Besondern zu verharren, sich zu verwandeln, sich zu spezificiren, und wie das Lebendige unter tausend Bedingungen sich darthun mag, hervorzutreten und zu verschwinden, zu solidesciren und zu schmelzen, zu erstarren und zu fliessen, sich auszudehnen und sich zusammenziehen. Weil nun alle diese Wirkungen im gleichen Zeitpunkt zugleich vorgehen, so kann Alles und Jedes zu gleicher Zeit eintreten. Entstehen und Vergehen, Schaffen und Vernichten, Geburt und Tod, Freud' und Leid, Alles wirkt durch einander, in gleichem Sinn und gleicher Maasse; deswegen denn auch das Besonderste, das sich ereignet, immer als Bild und Gleichniss des Allgemeinen auftritt."

Concerning the manner in which we begin to interpret the Universe and find "deeper depths opened with each soul", by breaking through an obstruction "by faith" and thus making new discoveries, compare "Sprüche in Prosa" (903):

"Alles, was wir Erfinden, Entdecken im höheren Sinne nennen, ist die bedeutende Ausübung, Bethätigung eines originalen Wahrheitsgefühles, das, im Stillen längst ausgebildet, unversehens mit Blitzesschnelle zu einer fruchtbaren Erkenntniss führt. Es ist eine aus den Innern am Aeussern sich entwickelnde Offenbarung, die den Menschen seine Gottähnlichkeit vorahnen lässt. Es ist eine Synthese von Welt und Geist, welche von der ewigen Harmonie des Daseins die seligste Versicherung giebt."

Further on in the "Credo" is also Goethean thought, though clothed in the language of the church. Her whole religion, though containing orthodox church ideas, is fundamentally Goethean. She probably did not realize herself how much she

was under the influence of Goethean thought here; even where she seemingly opposes him this is evident. The idea that Divinity reveals itself in the genius as decidedly Goethean. is?

Christ, too, she understood as such a genius, and class-
es him with other great geniuses. She did not believe he em-
bodied within himself all the highest attributes of a human be-
ing. Similarly Goethe says in his "Conversations with Ecker-
mann": "But, as the great being whom we name the Divinity,
manifests himself, not in men only, but in a rich, powerful nat-
ure, and mighty world-adventures, so, naturally, a representation
of him, framed from human attributes, cannot be adequate, and the
attentive observer will soon discern imperfections and contradic-
tions".¹

Closely related to this idea of the genius in her con-
ception of man's mission as a creator. Though already quoted
it will be well to quote again a passage recorded by Emerson of
Margaret Fuller's definition of life.

"She began with God as Spirit, Life, so full as to cre-
ate and love eternally, yet capable of pause. Love and creative-
ness are dynamic forces, out of which we, individually, as crea-
tures, go forth bearing his image, that is, having within our be-
ing the same dynamic forces, by which we also add constantly to
the total sum of existence, and shaking off ignorance, and its
effects, and by becoming more ourselves, i.e. more divine;-des-
troying sin in its principle, we attain to absolute freedom, we
return to God, conscious like himself, and, as his friends, giv-

¹ Conversations with Eckermann p. 377.

ing, as well as receiving, felicity forevermore. In short, we become gods, and able to give the life which we now feel ourselves able only to receive".¹

Almost identically the same idea is expressed in Goethe's poem "Wiederfinden"(Westöstlichen Divan) in the lines:

"Allah braucht nicht mehr zu schaffen,

Wir erschaffen seine Welt."

And in the poem "Eins und Alles",

"Dann mit dem Weltgeist selbst zu ringen

Wird unserer Kräfte Hochberuf."

It is interesting to note how deeply Margaret Fuller must have felt the spirit of this poem. Nearly the whole of her translation is in the form of an ardent prayer, much more of it, than in the original. Goethe's "Prometheus" and "Das Göttliche" appealed to her feeling in the same way. In the former she found too, how man might be a creator. Margaret Fuller's deep interest in Eckermann's "Conversations with Goethe", which she translated and from which she took a considerable part of the idea of her "Credo", was most probably due to the fact that it contained such a great part of Goethe's religious views.

As stated in the "Credo" Margaret Fuller believed in Eternal progression, namely, that we passed from one stage to another, through a series of lives, approaching more and more the perfect state. In a passage already quoted, from one of her letters she says: "I believe in Eternal progression. I believe in a God, a Beauty and Perfection to which I am to strive all my

¹ Memoirs I, 347.

life for assimilation."¹

This present life represented merely one of these stages on our road to Perfection. Thus she says of Goethe, in finding fault with him for remaining in court circles at Weimar.

"Perhaps Goethe is even now sensible that he should not have stopped at Weimar as his home, but made it one station on the way to Paradise; not stopped at humanity, but regarded it as symbolical of the divine, and given to others to feel more distinctly the centre of the universe, as well as the harmony in its parts."²

The thought that Goethe had not yet reached his highest wisdom and perfection is also indicated by the following passage at the end of her second article in the "Dial".

"Let us enter into his higher tendency, thank him for such angels as Iphigenia, whose simple truth mocks at all his wise "~~Beschränkungen~~"", and hope the hour when, girt about with many such, he will confess, contrary to his opinion, given in his latest days, that it is well worth while to live seventy years, if only to find that they are nothing in the sight of God".³

The same thought we find in Goethe:

"It is acknowledged that man consists of two parts, body and soul . . . I doubt not of our immortality, for nature cannot dispense with our continued activity."⁴

"Christianity has a might of its own, lifting up, from time to time, dejected, suffering humanity, and in this rises

¹ Memoirs I, 136.

² Life Without and Life Within, p. 45. ³ Ibid p. 60.

⁴ Conversations with Eckermann, p. 320.

above all philosophy, and needs no support therefrom. Neither does the philosopher need the support of religion to prove certain doctrines; for instance, that existence is prolonged into eternity. Man must believe in immortality; this belief corresponds with the wants of his nature. . . . To me, the eternal existence of my soul is proved, from my need of activity; if I work incessantly till my death, nature is pledged to give me another form of being when the present can no longer sustain my spirit".¹

Margaret Fuller inherited still another characteristic of her belief from her Master Goethe, namely, her belief in daemoniacal influences. As Emerson has pointed out she was naturally of a temperament to whom "coincidences, good and bad, omens, etc"., had a deep significance. This peculiar characteristic dated back to her youth and owed its origin probably to an overtaxed nervous system and to poor health later on. It is easily seen how naturally a belief in daemonology such as Goethe's would appeal to her.

"This propensity Margaret held with certain tenets of fate, which always swayed her, and which Goethe, who had found room and fine names for all this in his system, had encouraged; and, I may add, which her own experiences, early and late, seemed strangely to justify. . . . This remote seeking for the decrees of fate, this feeling of a destiny, casting its shadows from the very morning of thought, is the most beautiful species of idealism in our day. 'Tis finely manifested in Wallenstein".²

Tasso, too, and Rousseau were under this peculiar in-

¹ Conversations with Eckermann, p. 270

² Memoirs, I, p. 222.

fluence, she thought.

Again she writes: 'When Goethe received a letter from Zelter with a handsome superscription, he said, 'Lay that aside; it is Zelter's true hand-writing. Every man has a daemon, who is busy to confuse and limit his life. No way is the action of this power more clearly shown, than in the hand-writing. On this occasion, the evil influences have been evaded; the mood, the hand, the pen and paper have conspired to let our friend write truly himself.

You may perceive, I quote from memory, as the sentences are anything but Goethean; but I think ofter of this little passage. With me, for weeks and months, the daemon works his will. Nothing succeeds with me. I fall ill, or am otherwise interrupted. At these times, whether of frost, or sultry weather, I would gladly neither plant nor reap,- wait for the better times, which sometimes come, when I forget that sickness is ever possible. . . . As to the Daemoniacal, I know not that I can say to you anything more precise than you find from Goethe. There are no precise terms for such thoughts. The word instinctive indicates their existence. I intimated it in the little piece on the Drachenfels. . . . When conscious, self-asserting, it becomes (as power working for its own sake, unwilling to acknowledge love for its superior, must) the devil. That is the legend of Lucifer, the star that would not own its centre. Yet, while it is unconscious, it is not devilish, only daemonic. In nature, we trace it in all volcanic workings, in a boding position of lights, in whispers of the wind. . . in deceitful invitations of the water. . . and

in the shapes of all those beings who go about seeking what they may devour. We speak of a mystery, a dread; we shudder, but we approach still nearer, and a part of our nature listens, sometimes answers to this influence, which, if not indestructible, is at least indissolubly linked with the existence of matter.

In genius, and in character, it works, as you say instinctively; it refuses to be analyzed by the understanding, and is most of all inaccessible to the person who possesses it. We can only say, I have it, he has it. . . . It is most obvious in the eye. As we look on such eyes, we think on the tiger, the serpent, beings who lurk, glide, fascinate, mysteriously control. For it is occult by its nature, and if it could meet you on the highway, and be familiarly known as an acquaintance, could not exist. The angels of light do not love, yet they do not insist on exterminating it.

It has given rise to the fables of wizard, enchantress, and the like; these beings are scarcely good, yet not necessarily bad. Power tempts them. They draw their skills from the dead, because their being is coeval with that of matter, and matter is the mother of death."¹

In speaking of the Duke of Weimar, Margaret Fuller says:

"Goethe describes him as "Dämonisch", that is, gifted with an instinctive, spontaneous force, which at once, without calculation or foresight, chooses the right means to an end. As these beings do not calculate, so is their influence incalculable. Their repose has as much influence over other beings as their

¹ Memoirs I, p. 222. ff.

action, even as the thunder cloud, lying black and distant in the summer sky, is not less imposing than when it bursts and gives forth its quick lightnings. . . . Sometimes, though rarely, we see such a man in an obscure position; circumstances have not led him to a large sphere; he may not have expressed in words a single thought worth recording; but by his eye and voice he rules all around him.

He stands upon his feet with a firmness and calm security which make other men seem to halt and totter in their gait. In his deep eye is seen an infinite comprehension, an infinite reserve of power. No accent of his sonorous voice is lost on any ear within hearing; and, when he speaks, men hate or fear perhaps the disturbing power they feel, but never dream of disobeying." And then she quotes Goethe himself:

"The boy believed in nature, in the animate and inanimate, the intelligent and unconscious, to discover somewhat which manifested itself only through contradiction, and therefore could not be comprehended by any conception, much less defined by a word. It was not divine, for it seemed without reason; not human, because without understanding; not devilish, because it worked to good; not angelic, because it often betrayed a petulant love of mischief. It was like chance, in that it proved no sequence; it suggested the thought of Providence, because it indicated connection. To this all our limitations seem penetrable; it seemed to play at will with all the elements of our being; it compressed time and dilated space. Only in the impossible did it seem to delight, and to cast the possible aside with disdain.

This existence which seemed to mingle with others, some-

times to separate, sometimes to unite, I called the Dämonisch, after the example of the ancients, and others who have observed somewhat similar".⁽¹⁾

"The Dämonisch is that which cannot be explained by reason or understanding; it lies not in my nature, but I am subject to it.

Napoleon was a being of this class, and in so high a degree that scarce any one is to be compared with him. Also our late grand duke was such a nature, full of unlimited power of action and unrest, so that his own dominion was too little for him, and the greatest would have been too little. Demoniac beings of this sort the Greeks reckoned among their demigods".⁽²⁾ 3

Even in her last years she still held to this Geothean belief in daemonology. She writes from Italy:

"My days at Milan were not unmarked. I have known some happy hours, but they all lead to sorrow, and not only the cups of wine, but of milk, seem drugged with poison, for me. It does not seem to be my fault, this destiny. I do not court these things, - they come. I am a poor magnet, with power to be wounded by the bodies I attract."4

As stated in the "Credo" Margaret Fuller believed that evil (obstruction) in creation and in the development of character was as necessary as good (accomplishment). This corresponds exactly to the idea of the Prologue in Heaven of "Faust" expressed

(1) Quoted by Margaret Fuller from "Dichtung und Wahrheit"

(2) Quoted by Margaret Fuller from "Conversations with Eckermann".

3 Life Without and Life Within, p. 32 f.

4 Memoirs I, p. 226.

in the words of the Lord:

"Du darfst auch da nur frei erscheinen;
 Ich habe deinesgleichen nie gehasst.
 Von allen Geistern, die verneinen,
 Ist mir der Schalk am wenigsten zur Last.
 Des Menschen Tätigkeit kann allzu leicht erschlaffen,
 Er liebt sich bald die unbedingte Ruh;
 Drum geb' ich gern ihm den Gesellen zu,
 Der reizt und wirkt und muss als Teufel schaffen."¹

Quoting also from Herder: "Thus after an unchanging law of nature evil even has brought forth good".² "All destructive forces must not only in time be subdued by the forces of preservation, but must also serve to help in the building up of the whole".³ "Despite the fact that the destructive forces in man are his passions, the latter are necessary to prevent him from 'getting fond of unconditional repose'... Evil, according to this conception, acts as a leaven, a fermentative power, which finally produces good".⁴

Again in the words of Mephistopheles:

"Ich bin ein Teil von jener Kraft,
 Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft."⁵

The idea that evil is only the negative side of good is expressed again and again throughout Margaret Fuller's works.

¹ Goethe's "Faust" l. 336 ff.

² Herder "Ideen" 3, 327.

³ Ibid. p. 314.

⁴ Goethe's "Faust" Ed. Goebel; Notes p. 264.

⁵ Goethe's "Faust" ll. 1335-36.

In a dialogue which Margaret Fuller wrote the two characters represented, speaking on religious topics agree, "that whatever is, is good".¹ In another instance she praises the doctrine, "Resist not evil", and "every man his own priest, and the heart the only true church".² Again one of the reporters of the "conversation" writes;

"I have thought, sometimes, that her acceptance of evil was too great, - that her theory of the good to be eduved proved too much. But in a conversation I had with her yesterday, I understood her better than I had done. 'It might never be sin to us, at the moment', she said, 'it must be an excess, on which conscious puts the restraint'".³

And lastly Caroline H. Dall writes:

"Margaret thought it the climax of sin to despair. She believed evil to be a good in the grand scheme of things. She would not recognize it as a blunder. She must consider its scope a noble one. In one word, she would not accept the world - for she felt within herself the power to reject it - did she not believe evil working in it for good".⁴

This doctrine, in which she so thoroughly believed, as we have seen, is one of the fundamental doctrines of "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister". There is little doubt that she got these ideas chiefly from the works mentioned above. Certain it is that this

¹ Woman in the Nineteenth Century.

² Ibid, 55 f.

³ Memoirs I, 350.

⁴ Margaret and Her Friends, p. 113 f.

is neither Transcendental nor Puritan doctrine.

Margaret Fuller believed in a complete abandonment to our higher nature. But had absolutely no patience with those who under this excuse gave themselves over to their lower passions, or who allowed sentimentality to gain a complete mastery over the whole being. It is thus that she criticises sharply, in the one case, George Sand, and in the other, Bettine Brentano. "I love abandon only when natures are capable of the extreme reverse", she says.¹ Emerson writes that in life, "Margaret suffered no vice to insult her presence, but called the offender to instant account, when the law of right or beauty was violated".² "Margaret crowned all her talents and virtues with a love of truth, and the power to speak it", says Emerson again.³ Horace Greeley emphasizes the same characteristic, as do all her biographers. And with all of this she was a most natural woman. "I love best to be a woman", she, herself, said. And Emerson records, that, "In character Margaret was of all she had beheld the largest woman, and not a woman who wished to be a man".⁴

It is clear that what Margaret Fuller most desired was to find out the truth of human nature; and having arrived at a complete understanding of ^{her} nature, ever to remain true to its highest principles, and laws of development. All of which is in perfect harmony with the teachings of her master, Goethe.

¹ Memoirs I, p. 248.

² Ibid, 306.

³ Ibid, 303.

⁴ Ibid, 300.

"Like Goethe", she says, "I have never given way to my feelings, but have lived active, thoughtful, seeking to be wise".

We have seen the powerful influence of Goethe upon Margaret Fuller, how, through an intense study of his life and works, she developed her inner life of thought and feeling, and ripened into the extraordinary personality which her contemporaries conceded her to be. We have seen how she accepted Goethe's religious and philosophical teachings almost in their entirety, though she did not relinquish certain Puritan convictions. While we found that she agreed with the Transcendentalists, inasmuch as she, as well as they, strove after a higher, freer and nobler humanity, we also discovered how radically she differed from them in her fundamental religious and philosophical beliefs, and the methods by which she hoped to arrive at the goal at which they both aimed.

There remains but a few words to be said concerning the influences she exerted for the study of German in America, hitherto not mentioned.

Margaret Fuller herself, felt that by the year 1846, her efforts to arouse a healthy interest for German had met with a considerable degree of success. She writes:

"I feel with satisfaction that I have done a good deal to extend the influence of the great minds of Germany and Italy among my compatriots".¹

She had realized the sincere wish expressed a decade before when she so earnestly desired to interpret in some period-

¹ Introd. to Papers on Literature and Art, p. VII.

ical the German authors of whom she was most fond.¹

Besides her efforts to spread the knowledge of German through her printed articles, she translated (1836-37) for Dr. W. E. Channing, the apostle of the Unitarian church, and discussed with him the works of Herder and De Wette. The effect must have been considerable, for we find a number of the thoughts of these German thinkers incorporated into the doctrines of the Unitarian church. In the schools where Margaret Fuller taught, her favorite subject was German, and if we but look at the long list of German works which she was able to read through with her classes we may judge what interest she inspired into her pupils of German. Each of these in turn helped to introduce German thought and literature into this country,

One of the most telling influences of German, however, was through her "Conversations" in the highly cultured circles of Boston, where Mr. Clarke says: "She dazzled all who knew her," and where all those who heard her, including Emerson, agreed that her power was most remarkable. She inspired in these meetings, "the Spirit that giveth life", according to one of the reporters of the "Conversations", "she seemed a priestess of the youth. . . a companion". She was even called a "sibyl", a "prophetess"; and Emerson says: "She was sent to "announce a better day", and "had the power to inspire", and "the companion was made a thinker".² Margaret Fuller, herself, says: "All were in a glow".

If we add to this what Mrs. Dall has said, namely, that

¹ Memoirs I, 168.

² Ibid. 78; 349; 316.

Goethe was brought in continually and thoughts and illustrations taken from him, and now and then a subject for a whole evening's discussion, we see what an influence the "Conversations" must have had toward introducing Goethe into America. In fact the whole glowing account of the "Conversations" shows that Margaret Fuller followed out, consciously and unconsciously, in developing the inner lives of these, the members of her classes precisely the suggestions which she found in the works of Goethe.

How far Margaret Fuller's influence went in the proper understanding and appreciation of Goethe in America, we shall never be quite able to tell. This much we know, that all her associates, who, as we have seen, included the brightest minds in New England, became, with few exceptions, diligent and enthusiastic students of German, and of Goethe, especially.

After giving all the credit due to the German scholars connected with Harvard College, in one way or another:- Charles Follen, George Ticknor, E. E. Hale, F. H. Hedge, J. F. Clarke, and others, for their part in arousing a lively interest in the study of German in this country, and even taking into account the influences of such men as Carlyle and Coleridge across the sea, whose influences for Goethe and German studies generally were powerful upon Emerson and other American scholars; yet, after considering and weighing all these influences, still there is no doubt that one of the greatest factors in opening up for America,- to use a favorite expression of W. H. Channing from the "Memoirs" -, "the rich gardens of German literature", was Margaret Fuller. How many of her countrymen enjoyed the rare precious fruits they found there,

is shown by the zeal with which this whole literary circle studied German, and by the demand that this growing interest soon created for German in the colleges. German has held its own in this country ever since.

Indeed it seemed as if in Margaret Fuller one of Goethe's noblest womanly characters had descended from the land of poetry into real life, a priestess of a coming higher civilization in America. Or as James Freeman Clarke has it :

"Margaret was to persons younger than herself, a Makaria and Natalia. She was wisdom and intellectual beauty. ----- To those of her own age, she was a sibyl and seer, - a prophetess, revealing the future, pointing the path, opening their eyes to the great aims only worthy of pursuit in life. To those older than herself she was like the Euphorion in Goethe's drama, child of Faust and Helen - a wonderful union of exuberance and judgement, born of romantic fullness and classic limitations." ¹

¹ Memoirs I, p. 97.

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V I T A.

The author was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, March 28, 1874. A part of his studies in preparation for college were pursued in the Columbia, Missouri, Normal Academy, and some in the University of Missouri. In 1898, he entered the University of Missouri and graduated in 1902, with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. During the following two years he was Principal of the Hermann, Missouri, High School, and a Member of the Gasconade County, Missouri, Board of Education. The year 1904-1905 he spent in pursuing advanced studies in German in the Harvard Graduate School. For the next year he was elected to a professorship in Missouri Valley College and taught German and English. From 1906 to 1908 he continued his studies in German literature and philology in the Harvard Graduate School, taking his Master's degree in 1907. In 1908 he was elected a University Fellow in German in the University of Illinois.





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